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Christian Courier

Formerly known as .....

Calvinist Contact

A Reformed Weekly

NOVEMBER 13, 1992/48th year of publication/No. 2329

Thinkbit:

Excited third grader to his mother, after having talked about the October referendum at school: "Hey, Mom, guess what! Tomorrow we're going to vote on the Resurrection!"

From: A teacher in an Ontario Christian school.

Russian comic-book Gospel could reach millions, says evangelist

Bill Fledderus

TORONTO, Ont. — Six years ago Warmholt Houwing left his job as a captain in the Dutch merchant marine to become an evangelist. He now ministers to seafarers at the port of Antwerp, Belgium. He says he feels especially called to bring the Gospel to ethnic Russians, and so he devotes 90 percent of his time to that work.

Houwing is also coordinating a project called "Light to Russia," which intends to print and distribute over one million copies of the book *He lived among us* to Russian children in rural areas.

He lived among us is a colourful comic book in modern Russian. It devotes 120 illustrated pages to the story of Jesus' life and ministry and features brief selections from the four Gospels. It ends with four (non-illustrated) sections from the Bible: the complete epistles of James and Ephesians, and also Romans 1-8 and 1 Corinthians 15.

For this project Houwing is working in conjunction with Voice of the Martyrs, a Christian organization founded by Richard Wurmbrand, which works in communist and formerly communist countries. (Voice of the Martyrs, with affiliates in over 50 countries, is known in Canada as Jesus to the Communist World, though it will soon be changing its name to fall in line with its American affiliate).

Gospel related clearly and simply

"This Russian picture Bible tells the Gospel message in a clear and simple way," says Houwing. "Most Russians, especially children from age seven to 14, have little or no idea who Jesus is or what Christianity is about. A book like this speaks directly to them and will also reach parents and other family members."

"I have already seen the amazing impact this book can have on over 200,000 Russian seafarers," he says. "Even many who are virtual atheists want their children to read and to learn about Christianity. Many weep openly at the thought of being able to give their children such a gift."

see **PRAYING** p. 2 ...

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Houwing says an illustrated version of Jesus' life is understandable even to Russians who have never heard of Jesus before.

Teachers told to face growing trend away from organized religion

Bert Witvoet

HAMILTON, Ont. — "Faith is transmitted and sustained through relationships and teachers are strategically placed for establishing relationships." That was the message sociologist Reginald Bibby brought to 800 members of the Ontario Christian School Teachers Association (OCSTA).

The teachers met for a two-day convention (Oct. 29-30) at Hamilton District Christian High School to hear speakers, attend workshops, visit a book and equipment display and watch a ballet performance.

Bibby, who is a professor of sociology at Lethbridge University, Lethbridge, Alta., has co-authored several books that deal with religious trends in Canada. He threw a handful of statistics at the teachers which show that organized religion in Canada is in serious trouble, with only 18 percent of young Canadians attending church on a regular basis.

But Bibby sees signs of hope in the persistence of Canadians to identify

see **EVANGELICALS** p. 24 ...

Photo: Bert Witvoet

Principal Jake Vriend (l.) from Guelph, Ont., shares a joke with Reginald Bibby.

In this issue:

Reformed diehards tell the CRTC that what Canada needs is a new definition of religion..... p.6

Wallace Bratt explores why many East Germans fear foreigners.... p.11

One of the men who killed five missionaries in Ecuador in 1956 tells his story .....p. 12,13

Curt Gesch examines *Teen Trends*, the product of Reginald Bibby and Don Posterski's continuing research.....p.14

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News/Remembrance

Praying for 10 million copies

... continued from p. 1

Houwing and Voice of the Martyrs are now campaigning to raise money to print and distribute the book among the 17 million children (aged seven to 14) of ethnic Russia, "particularly those who live in rural areas and remote villages," says Houwing.

Houwing expresses the prayer "that our Father will provide [enough money] to print 10 million copies." A supporter in the Netherlands has already pledged enough money for one million copies, he says. Previous smaller printings of the book have been supported by various organizations, including the World Home Bible League of Canada.

Houwing and Voice of the Martyrs intend to print the book in the Netherlands in March and April 1993 at a cost of $1 a copy. The books will be transported with the help of well-established Christian organizations such as Open Doors and Chuck Colson prison ministries.

Schools and churches have promised to cooperate in the distribution. Copies will also go to some of the people in Russian prisons.

Book evokes 'amazing' response

Houwing originally came across the book several years ago and was amazed by the positive reactions it brought from seafarers.

"The first time I lent a copy was to a Russian named Andre. I told him I needed it back the next day because I had only two copies. When he brought it back his face was totally changed. He said he'd been up all night reading it. He looked at me and with great joy said, 'I believe!'"

By way of a long and complicated process, Houwing tracked down the author of the original text, an aging Roman Catholic priest named Pierre Tivoillier, in Paris. Tivoillier wrote the book and his friend Noel Gloesener illustrated it; together they published it with the help of a local businessperson, never envisioning that it would go any further than Paris.

However, Voice of the Martyrs saw the great potential of the book and has now produced versions of it in Russian, Hungarian, Romanian and Chinese, says Houwing.

Inquiries or tax-receiptable donations designated for "Light to Russia" should be directed c/o Jesus to the Communist World, P.O. Box 117 Port Credit, Mississauga, ON L5G 4L5.

An illustration from the Russian version of He lived among us.

Rural routes

Maynard Vander Galien

A visit to Vimy Ridge

Since I stood on the very ground where some of the biggest land battles were fought during the two world wars, Remembrance Day has come to mean a lot more to me than just wearing a poppy a week or two prior to November 11.

It was 75 years ago, in April of 1917, that four divisions of Canadian soldiers numbering around 100,000 men fought one of the biggest battles of the First World War and defeated the Germans, taking Vimy Ridge.

A few years ago I was with a group of Western Canadian grain farmers on a three-week guided European tour of agricultural areas in England, the Netherlands, Germany, France and Switzerland. We also visited many of the major tourist attractions and travelled down the Rhine River and up the high mountains in Switzerland.

We were on the last leg of our tour of Paris having spent a morning at the fabulous Palace of Versailles and we had a few hours to ourselves before heading to Calais where we were to board a ship for the crossing of the English Channel to see the "white cliffs of Dover," and then on to London.

An unforgettable detour

Our English tour guide suggested we make a little detour to see Vimy Ridge. We were all anxious to see this famous World War I battlefield. But finding it was not easy for our Dutch bus driver. There were no road signs pointing the way to the high plateau, or better known as a ridge, which juts up high over the low-lying flat agricultural fields near the Belgian border.

The bus driver stopped at one small village along the way and asked for directions. As we travelled in the deluxe motorcoach we marvelled at the fertile farmland that is noted for flax production. We saw many beautiful fields and neat farm buildings.

At Vimy Ridge we stood in silence at first and looked down at the peaceful quiet green landscape below us. It was hard to imagine that this very soil we were standing on was once a bloody battlefield of mud, trenches, barbed wire, tunnels, artillery fire, and blood and death.

Hard to comprehend

We walked around the huge 70 metre-high Canadian War Memorial that is made of marble and concrete. We glanced over some of the 11,285 names of Canadian soldiers who died during the war and have no known graves. The monument is in memory of the 60,000 soldiers who died at Vimy Ridge.

To the right and behind the memorial is a huge cemetery of many rows of neat, straight tombstones where many of the Canadian soldiers are buried. We walked up and down reading the names to see if we could spot familiar ones.

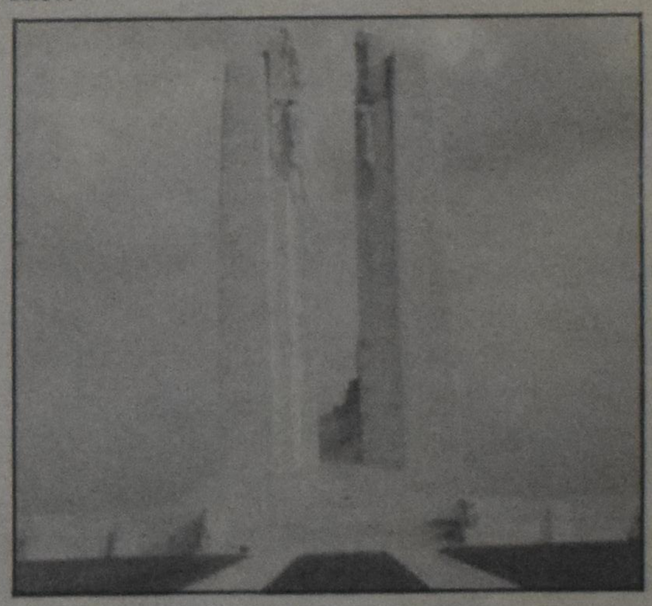

Photo: Maynard VanderGalien

The concrete and marble Canadian War Memorial at Vimy Ridge, France.

Not far from the tombstones was an ugly reminder of the war still in the landscape. Hundreds of craters, some huge, some small, where exploding shells had landed and blown the ground skyward, were made into neat landscaped areas.

I'll never forget walking around those First World War craters on Vimy Ridge.

Maynard Vander Galien farms in the Ottawa Valley (Renfrew, Ont.) and writes weekly columns for local newspapers.

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Comment

Pressreview

Carl D. Tuyl

Pressreview

Let's have the real important news first: there is rebellion in Edmonton's city council. Two rookie councillors refused to wear ties in the meeting and Her Worship the mayor refuses to wear the chain of office. No wonder there were power outages in the city.

Conflict is also present in the Reform Party's hierarchy where three high-ranking executive members resigned. Some members thought Preston Manning's references to "the Mulroney deal" in pre-referendum ads were cheap shots. In addition the party was not doing well in recent Gallup polls.

★ ★ ★

There is a bit of a power outage in the Tory ranks as well. Monsieur had to take control of his caucus before he went to Florida. Caucus solidarity still has a few cracks, however. What were Communications Minister Perrin Beatty and former Alberta premier Peter Lougheed discussing in that swanky Tory Albany Club in Toronto? And why has External Affairs Minister Barbara McDougall hired a Tory organizer? And why is our Justice Minister Kim Campbell definitely (?) not campaigning?

Somehow one gets the impression that Mulroney is being backed into a political cul de sac. The fact that his own riding voted NO did not help very much either. Whatever the reality may be, potential successors are many, like locusts descending on a field of ripe corn.

★ ★ ★

Alberta Premier Getty let it be known that on the night of the referendum vote he switched to football on his TV. How's that for being involved?

★ ★ ★

This country is for sure changing, folks: Kingston's Queen's University advertises in Asia (a result of coming in third on *Maclean's* ranking of Canadian universities?); Eaton's in Vancouver now accepts Japanese currency; Toronto's Church of Universal Love advertises a message service and the *Globe and Mail* contained an ad that offered a 25-minute movie created just for cats. Gimme a break!

★ ★ ★

The Toronto Symphony received a 257-year-old bottle of wine for its auction. The bottle will not be sold for less than $100,000. Wow!

★ ★ ★

Statistics Canada continues to stand on guard and supplies us with the true national navel-gazing details. It lets us know that Albertans have more possessions than other Canadians, and of course need bigger houses in which to stow all their stuff. No wonder — they don't pay provincial sales tax!

On the other hand (and other side) our Newfoundland fellow citizens have the most crowded living quarters, but they tend to have the most sex, says Michael Sullivan from the Decima Research company. Crowded quarters, eh?

★ ★ ★

Ontario's premier Bob Rae is collecting enemies as if they were priceless possessions. He's got the province's collective police force against him as a result of some new firearm regulation, and his pending labour legislation makes him as popular in the business community as a near-sighted baseball umpire in the home team's dugout.

The other NDP premiers are trying to be kinder and gentler. Saskatchewan's NDP has released an economic white paper that hesitantly reaches out to the business community like a shy Romeo trying to raise enough courage to kiss a reluctant beau [*belle*, Carl].

★ ★ ★

Well I may as well fess up. Egg all over my face, spilling even on my nice blue power tie. Months ago I predicted that President Bush would make Swedish meatballs out of Slick Willie. Look what happened: Slick Willie is about to become Mr. President. Even the staid *New York Times* had a big three-line header on its front page. The whole family values thing dudded like a linguist at a convention of mathematicians. No dice, no sympathy and no impact.

I was not the only one with egg on my face. How about the Pope? He had the stuff all over his white cassock. Galileo was right after all, His Holiness admitted. Now all that remains is to have the Christian Reformed Church change Hymn 412 where the sun still "does its successive journeys run."

★ ★ ★

British Prime Minister John Major put down the uprising of the Euro-rebels in the House of Commons. Barely though. The Maastricht Treaty passed with a three-vote majority.

★ ★ ★

The country of Namibia is stricken with drought, and famine threatens. So what does the country's government do with foreign aid? Buy food supplies? No sir. It buys a plane for the president. Let them eat cake.

★ ★ ★

The most poignant news item of the week, more painful than the Bush defeat or the Mulroney retreat, is that after surviving the siege of Sarajevo for more than 200 days, a bear, the last animal in that city's zoo, has died. Broken heart, I bet.

Some more sad news: a state-run religious charity in Iran announced that it was increasing the $2 million bounty for killing Salman Rushdie the novelist.

To the list of bankrupt cities you can now add Buenos Aires, which is about $600 million in debt. In spite of a surplus of 15,000 employees the municipal government has difficulty collecting the city's trash, and potholes in the streets are deeper than the Falconbridge mines.

★ ★ ★

One of the more significant events of the past month was the 50th anniversary of the presence of the Royal Netherlands Army in Stratford, Ont. These were Dutch men recruited from across North and South America and from around the world to fight for the liberation of the Netherlands. The Royal Brigade "Princess Irene" which also originated in Stratford took part in the Allied operations until Germany's surrender. The colours of the regiment were presented at a memorial service held on October 10 at the St. James Anglican Church in the city of Stratford.

Carl Tuyl is a member of the Ontario Provincial Interfaith Committee on Chaplaincy and also the chaplaincy coordinator for the Christian Reformed Church.

Belated help

Bert Witvoet

A funeral director told the following true story on a CBC documentary program. It s humour and tragedy struck me.

A woman came to his funeral home on a snowy day to pick up an urn that contained her husband's cremated remains. After she was given the urn, she returned to her car but hung around on the parking lot for a while.

The funeral director went out to see if she needed any help.

"I'm okay," she told him. " I was stuck in the snow, but I used my husband's ashes to get going." Then she added, "He never did help me when he was alive. He finally made himself useful."

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Editorial

Why Jesus goes for the bottom of the heap

Prisoners who count themselves among the sheep of Christ (some say black sheep) have a peculiar problem. How do they apply the verse in Matthew 25 that says, "I was in prison and you came to visit me"?

It's not a hypothetical question for them. The other day I spent a few hours with Ron Dube and Ken Smith, two Christian friends incarcerated in one of Kingston's seven jails. Part of the visit, which took place in the chapel, was spent studying Jesus' teachings in Matthew 25: 31-46. One of the two brothers mentioned how verse 36b posed a real challenge for him.

"It's easy for me to apply the verse only one way," he said. "I am Christ. I'm one of those who are down. People are supposed to be nice to me and visit me. But I had to learn the hard way that I have to see Christ in other people. There are guys in here who have all kinds of needs."

Amazing, isn't it? To think that Christ switches places like that and to discover that his love can turn a prisoner into a visitor without that prisoner even leaving the confines of what he calls "the house."

There are plenty of "least" around

The trick, if one can call it that, is to recognize that Christ is willing to identify with "the least of these brothers of mine." Jesus is apparently not into high society. His heart is with the down and out.

You've got to be pretty low on the ladder not to be able to find someone who is less well off than you are. Most of us have plenty of "least-of-these" brothers and sisters around.

Another trick is to realize that we are called upon only to do "the least" of helpful things, such as giving something to eat or drink, a place of shelter, some clothes, some comfort while in hospital or prison. In this passage Jesus does not ask us to perform great miracles or provide deep answers to spiritual needs. He actually limits his teaching here to physical and emotional needs. Of course, the message that shines through such simple acts of kindness is highly spiritual.

How "least" are the Jays?

My visit to Kingston came hard on the heels of an event that could not be considered "least" by any seventh-inning stretch of the imagination. The Toronto Blue Jays had won the 1992 World Series. Nothing least about that.

It's no secret that Toronto bought its way into the series with salaries to players that totaled more than $45 million per year. The franchise could do that because more than 4 million fans had passed through the turnstiles of Skydome. Canadians throughout the country went wild with joy as the upside-down flag came right-side up after all. Nothing least about any of this.

Now the question is, was Christ at any of the Blue Jays games? Could you sneak into heaven, so to speak, by visiting him in the Skydome? Is the king one day going to say, "Come you who are blessed by my Father; take your inheritance. For I was Kelly Gruber and you watched me hit a home run"?

Yes, Christ was there

We never talked about the Blue Jays while I was with my friends. Well, actually we did. My one friend told me how watching the Jays had been difficult for him. His former wife used to attend Blue Jays games with her boyfriend while he was in jail. By watching some of the games he had finally been able to come to terms with that and some healing had taken place.

So Christ in a strange sort of way can even be found at the World Series. And I'm not necessarily talking about the guy with the John 3:16 sign, who somehow always manages to occupy a good seat. Nor about the fact that some of the players thanked Jesus for the win. I'm thinking that the down and out can find comfort in the swing of a bat. There is something "least" about that too.

Wherever you look, Christ is present in the most humble and simple of situations.

Does Jesus dislike the rich?

One question we discussed briefly in that prison chapel was: Why does Jesus identify with the poor and helpless and not with the rich and powerful? Maybe because he himself was poor. Maybe, but is that the real reason?

It isn't that Jesus does not like rich or powerful people, we concluded. But these people are often not available to him. Think of the parable of the great banquet and the many "no thank you very much but I just can't make it this time" answers he got. Rich and influential people invest a lot in this life and they don't always have time for Jesus or the poor.

Jesus has nothing against rich or powerful people as such, as long as they are poor in spirit. That's the main criterion he uses for picking friends. He talks about the poor in spirit in the very first beatitude and calls them blessed "for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

God chooses the poor

People who are poor in spirit don't put themselves on a pedestal, though they may have much power and wealth. They know they have come from dust and to dust they shall return. They don't pretend that their frame of dust is somehow of superior quality.

But let's be realistic. It's nice to be romantic about rich and powerful people being poor in spirit; the fact of the matter is, they are usually *not*. It's for good reasons that the Apostle James writes: "Has not God chosen those who are poor in the eyes of the world to be rich in faith?" And to clinch his argument against those who show favouritism to the rich he reminds them: "Is it not the rich who are exploiting you?"

And so the rule of thumb is that you have a better chance of finding Jesus among the poor than among the rich. The sad reality of why things of the kingdom have to be least is that there is less resistance to love at the bottom of the heap.

BW

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— provides opportunities for contact and discussion for the Christian community.

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Reader s Comment

A historian looks at anniversary dates

Bert den Boggende

Last year, while doing research on Dutch Calvinist immigrants, Canadian multiculturalism and the early days of Calvin Christian School in Hamilton, Ont., I had access to several different archives such as board and consistory minutes and early issues of *Calvinist Contact*.

Unfortunately, some minute books and early issues were missing, and deciphering the handwriting was sometimes an exercise in frustration. In spite of these problems, there was enough material to write a thesis. I would like to highlight one aspect of that research: the difficulty of ascertaining the exact date of the founding of an organization. As a consequence of that difficulty the question "When do we celebrate anniversaries?" arises.

When did the first meeting take place?

This September Calvin Christian School in Hamilton celebrated its 40th anniversary. The society responsible for the school is about 15 years older. The dated minutes go back to Dec. 17, 1937. But that was not really the beginning of the society because an earlier meeting at an unknown date was held. My guess is that this meeting took place on Dec. 10.

By the way, the early discussions about opening a Christian school in Hamilton were frustrated by the departure of several members to the recently opened Holland Marsh. In fact, the settlers in the Marsh were the first ones to start a [Reformed] Christian school in Canada when they opened in Feb. 1943. Had they not left, Hamilton might have been the first one.

OACS anniversary date in doubt

A week difference is not so much, certainly not compared to the problematic anniversary date of the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS). How close were this year's 40th anniversary celebrations at the end of October to the founding date? The first dated entry in the surviving minute book is Dec. 24, 1952. But again it is clear that previous meetings had been held.

During the fall of 1952 there was much talk about Christian "higher" education, partly due to a fundraising drive by Calvin College for a new addition. First Hamilton Christian Reformed Church endorsed the drive, but it did so "with the ultimate aim to supporting the organizing of Christian high schools in Ontario" (minutes Oct. 30, 1952).

Similar ideas led to the founding of the "Christian Higher Education Society of Ontario", which was in existence by late October (See *Calvinist Contact*, Nov. 15, 1952, p.5). It is from this organization that the minutes of Dec. 24, 1952, come.

In March 1953 this organization merged with the OACS, which, according to *Calvinist Contact* of March 9, 1956, began in Oct. 1952. If C.C. was correct, then the OACS anniversary celebrations are pretty close in time to the actual founding date. But was C.C. correct?

A bit of evidence

I don't think so. C.C. probably confused the beginning of the OACS with the founding of the Christian Higher Education Society. The problem is that the early minutes of the OACS have not survived. However, one tiny piece of evidence can be found in the files of Calvin Christian School of Hamilton.

Before Mr. J. van der Velde became the school's first principal, he was the school society's secretary. In that capacity he reported to the school's general meeting that on Wednesday, March 5, 1952, he had attended a meeting which, I suggest, was the founding meeting of the OACS. If I am correct, the 40th anniversary celebrations should have taken place in the spring.

The Sarnia incident

There is, however, another possible scenario. According to C.C. March 9, 1956, the OACS was "dormant and dead" between early 1953 and early 1955. It came to life again in the spring of 1955, after a public school inspector in Sarnia suggested the closure of all Christian schools in Ontario. From this perspective the 40th anniversary would have to wait until the spring of 1995.

Incidentally, the Sarnia incident also had its impact on C.C. *Calvinist Contact* was the product of the merger of the Ontario-based *Contact* and the Alberta-based *Canadian Calvinist*. From 1951 until 1955 the paper rarely reported on Christian school matters, following the example set by the *Contact*, [which was more concerned with immigration and settlement issues than with establishing Christian schools — Editor]. By so doing it did not follow the example of *The Canadian Calvinist* [which had more of a 'Kingdom' vision — Editor]. The latter had begun its publication in 1945 with an enthusiastic report of the opening of Lacombe Christian school.

In March and April of 1955 C.C. published several articles on the (perceived) dangers threatening the Christian school movement. One negative event had two positive results. God's math was at work.

Bert den Boggende is a historian who lives in Hamilton, Ont.

The people did the right thing on October 26

Nick Loenen

Canada is rapidly moving to nationhood. Who says Canadians are dull, uninterested in politics and ambivalent about who they are? It may have been difficult, but we have progressed enormously. We have moved from spectators to participants. Casting aside our traditional deferential attitude to the political elite, every one of us has been empowered to help shape our common destiny.

A mere 30 years ago status Indians could not vote, yet today they sit as equals with the Prime Minister and premiers at the constitutional table. Canadian tolerance and understanding is reaching out to stop exclusion and to start including all citizens. Never again will constitutional deals be struck by a few to govern the destiny of the many.

Let the people decide

The Canadian constitution used to be an agreement between governments — federal and provincial. Since the Charter of 1982 recognized the rights of citizens, politicians must step aside to let the people decide. Trudeau wanted a popular referendum in 1981 to settle the constitution, but was thwarted by petty provincial premiers who saw themselves as the only legitimate constitutional players. After the massive NO vote such parochial views belong to the historical dustbin. Constitution-making is unlike ordinary law-making.

We should be clear about what a constitution is. A constitution is not the act of government, but of the people constituting its government. The NO vote has driven home this simple truth to our politicians, thus opening the way to finally doing it right.

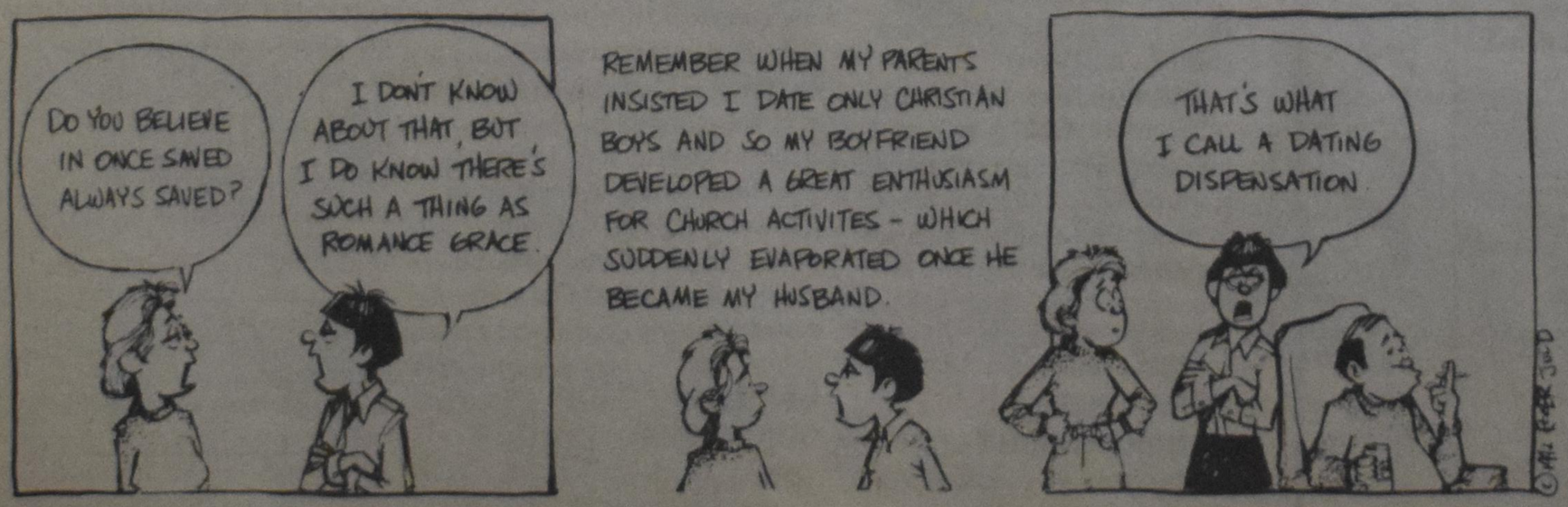
An orderly process

Doing it right requires a two-step process. First, a popularly elected constituent assembly, and second, a popular ratification by referendum requiring a double majority: a majority of Canadian citizens and a majority in a majority of the provinces.

However, this process should not be

continued on p. 7 ....

Beyond Belief


DO YOU BELIEVE IN ONCE SAVED ALWAYS SAVED?
I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THAT, BUT I DO KNOW THERE'S SUCH A THING AS ROMANCE GRACE.
REMEMBER WHEN MY PARENTS INSISTED I DATE ONLY CHRISTIAN BOYS AND SO MY BOYFRIEND DEVELOPED A GREAT ENTHUSIASM FOR CHURCH ACTIVITES - WHICH SUDDENLY EVAPORATED ONCE HE BECAME MY HUSBAND.
THAT'S WHAT I CALL A DATING DISPENSATION.

Society

Needed: a new definition of 'religion'

Reinder J. Klein

The Canadian Radio-television and Telecommunications Commission (CRTC) is currently reviewing its nine-year-old policy on religious broadcasting. Out of some 2,500 interested parties who submitted briefs, roughly 70 were invited to appear at public hearings held in Ottawa and Winnipeg.

Keith Spicer, well-known chairperson of Canada's erstwhile unity road show, seemed genuinely perplexed when an intervenor at one of those hearings suggested that religion does not necessarily centre on a divine being.

"We are going to have a very interesting two weeks," Mr. Spicer observed, "if we have to come up with a new definition of religion."

Mr. Spicer was responding to political theorist Dr. Paul Marshall, professor at Toronto's Institute for Christian Studies and spokesperson for the Evangelical Fellowship of Canada (EFC). Marshall had asserted that "religion" as understood in Canada is a sectarian and culturally bound concept. "It's a particular type of secular, Western orientation which ends up ghetto-izing religions," Marshall argued. "It is both unhelpful and unfair. Religion must be understood in a broader way."

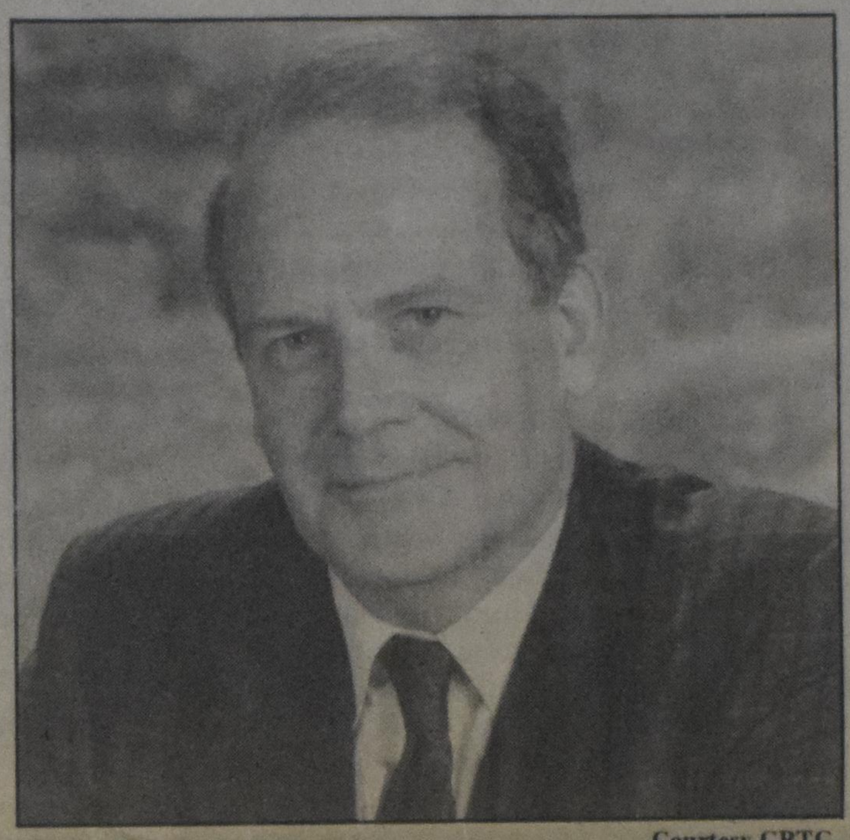
Commitments are religious

When pressed to give a better definition of religion, Marshall said he liked the one offered by the Council of Christian Reformed Churches in Canada (CCRCC), which recommended that the CRTC should "accept as its definition of religious *that which expresses a fundamental allegiance or is held to be of ultimate significance*, as *that which relates to the basic commitment of a person, community or institution.*"

The council's brief to which Marshall referred also suggests "that a helpful antonym for *secular* is *spiritual*. The term *religious*, on the other hand, connotes a fundamental and deep personal loyalty that can be applied equally to either secular or spiritual values and beliefs.

What is a god?

In questioning the council's (CCRCC) representatives (Arie VanEek and Reinder Klein) following *their* presentation, Commissioner Louis B. Sherman conceded the point that broadcasting activities are rooted in one belief system or other. However, he was reluctant to accept such systems as religious in nature. Clearly, traditionally held paradigms die hard.



Courtesy CRTC.

Keith Spicer, chairperson of the CRTC.

If belief systems that focus on a divinity are the only ones to be considered religions, it becomes necessary to examine the idea of divinity itself. What is a god? And does a god necessarily have to be a spiritual entity?

Many older religions focused on concrete images. The Greeks made up a whole plethora of gods, almost every one of them remarkably human in form and conduct. And the Romans persecuted Christians precisely because the latter refused to worship the emperors, all of whom were thoroughly human. Is it too far-fetched to suggest these were secular rather than spiritual religions?

The Bible identifies a range of forces as "false gods" and forbids their worship. For example, it warns against the worship of Mammon, an abstract money god. It seems the key here is found less in the nature of "god" than in the worship of it.

What causes fragmentation?

Mr. Sherman's recognition of belief systems is a step in the right direction. Belief systems are expressions of faith and hope in things not proven and usually unseen. Thus many people have placed their trust in education, others in military force, others in financial security and again others in physical attractiveness or in a combination of these.

These different belief systems come out of faith and value frameworks that are deeply held. Moreover, they present conflicting truth claims, in consequence of which their adherents make fundamental decisions and adopt patterns of conduct that can seriously fragment a society. The present situation in Canada is a case in point.

Mr. Spicer asked if greater access to broadcast licenses might not contribute to a fragmentation of the country. Surely, if anything is fragmenting Canada it is not so much conflicting beliefs in spiritual divinities as it is the remarkable devotion to a broad variety of economic, political and regional gods, including that supreme local one called ME.

Language a tool of oppression

In the past, the CRTC could —and did—lump all spiritually inclined groups together, tidily identifying them as "religious broadcasters." These had to be given a separate "religious" network, subject to regulations no other network had to contend with. It not only ghetto-ized certain groups, it also reinforced the false notion that other networks are neutral in terms of values and life-views.

Our society needs to be liberated from the bondage of the narrow and constricting concept that "religion" has become. Times change, as social practices do, and as language does. We should recognize that all beliefs and the choices they inform issue from basic assumptions that are fundamentally religious in nature.

Putting the myth to rest

In broadcasting, journalism, politics, education and a host of other areas the term "religion" should finally be allowed to come of age and be taken to refer to fundamental, personal and deeply held convictions out of which an individual or community makes life-shaping decisions.

Then the myth of neutrality can be put to rest. Provincial governments could then extend funding privileges to independent, confessional schools, and then the CRTC could put into place a comprehensive broadcasting code of ethics that applies equally to all and that discriminates against none. Such an approach in broadcasting would not necessarily open the airwaves to neo-Nazis, fund-raising fanatics and sundry groups of malcontents. The regulations would see to that. But it would begin to redress an injustice which, in a pluralistic country such as ours, should no longer be tolerated.

Reinder Klein is a freelance writer living in Creemore, Ont. He and his wife Diane run Educom Consulting, dedicated to assisting Christian groups and organizations.

Christian Courier

has adopted
six objectives which represent our continuing philosophy

This week we publish Objective 2:

"Public Justice"

"Help readers assume responsibility for the welfare of society by encouraging the renewal of public life, speaking up against injustice and exposing the myth of neutrality in the public sphere."

News/Comment

Bernardi's Calgary Philharmonic Orchestra a source of national pride

(Canadian Scene) — On November 2 the Calgary Philharmonic began its first international concert tour. Known as "The Pipeline Tour," the trip is sponsored by Western Canada's natural gas industry. The orchestra will play in Canadian and American cities served by Canadian gas pipelines as well as in Washington D.C., Ottawa and Toronto.

The tour began just after the opening of Mario Bernardi's ninth season as music director of the Calgary Philharmonic. Under his guidance the orchestra has grown into "a point of national pride," according to William Littler, music critic of the *Toronto Star*. Bernardi is the most recorded Canadian conductor, an orchestra spokesperson claims. Unlike the orchestra, he is no stranger to performing internationally, having conducted throughout the United States, Europe, the former Soviet Union and Mexico.

Educated in war-time Italy

Bernardi was born of Italian parentage in 1930 in Kirkland Lake, a northern Ontario mining town, where his father was a blacksmith. Bernardi senior was eager to have his children educated in Italy and together with their mother, Mario Bernardi and his brother and sister left Canada. The coming of World War II saw the Bernardis unable to return to the safety of Canada. They were living with relatives in Treviso, not far from Venice. From 1943 on, the city was under frequent Allied bombardment, but Mario Bernardi's dedication to music compensated for the hardships and dangers.

When his mother and siblings returned to Canada, Bernardi remained in Italy because he was already enrolled as a piano student at the Venice Conservatory. In 1947 he graduated at the top of his class. He then returned to Canada, in spite of the misgivings of his professor who told him he would be returning to a "musical desert."

Back in Canada Bernardi continued his studies at Toronto's Royal Conservatory. His Italian heritage naturally drew him to opera and it was in this field that Bernardi first gained an international reputation. He made his operatic debut conducting the Canadian Opera Company's production of *Hansel and Gretel* and by 1963 had been invited to conduct at the prestigious English National Opera. In 1966 he became music director of the Opera.

Three years later Bernardi moved to Ottawa to become the founding music director of the national Arts Centre Orchestra which he led for 13 years. For his contribution to Canadian music he was appointed a Companion of the Order of Canada in 1972.

Vancouver too

Bernardi is also principal conductor of the Vancouver Symphony Orchestra and with both this orchestra and the Calgary Philharmonic he has made numerous recordings for CBC Records, including the complete symphonies of Robert Schuman with the Philharmonic. One of his latest releases features the magnificent organ built for Calgary by the Casavant family of St. Hyacinthe, Que., who are among the world's most renowned organ makers.

Titled *Patrick Wedd, Organ*, the recording features the Canadian organist of that name playing with the orchestra under Bernardi's direction. The superb sound of this recording reflects the splendid acoustics of Calgary's Jack Fisher Hall, built in 1985 for the orchestra.

Bernardi is equally at home with Bach, whose *Brandenburg Concerti* he has recorded; and with Bartok, whose *Piano Concerto No. 3* is to be released shortly.

Canadians are gradually beginning to learn that their country has some great musicians, Bernardi among them.

The people did the right thing on October 26

... continued from p. 5

started immediately. Quebec should first decide for itself the question of independence. I am confident the extremists will not have their way. Out of this will emerge a stronger, united Canada.

In the meantime the process of more meaningfully including Aboriginals in the determination of their own affairs is well underway and can proceed with renewed vigour. This holds equally for the role and place of women, the disabled, visible and other minorities within our society.

Cutting waste and duplication of services between Ottawa and the provinces and eliminating inter-provincial trade barriers both need immediate attention and can be addressed on a case by case basis. We should reject the attempt to solve a host of social and political problems through the constitution.

The NO vote does not put us back to square one. Canada is evolving into nationhood. If we seize the opportunity and do it right, we will strengthen our experience of Canadian citizenship, build a national community and prevent provincial dismantling of the centre.

Nick Loenen is a former M.L.A. who lives in Richmond, B.C.

As editor it feels good not to have to explain

Bert Witvoet

Last week I wrote about the opening of the Bai'tul Islam Mosque in Maple Ont. After the formal events, my wife and I decided to skip the line-ups to the food tent outside the mosque (actually, we couldn't find the right one and I almost walked into a tent that was for Muslim women only). Instead we drove a few kilometres west and found a homey kind of restaurant in rustic Kleinburg.

In the restaurant line-up we met two non-Muslim couples who had also been at the opening of the mosque. We talked for a while about what we had experienced. Finally one of the men asked me what my job was. "I'm an editor," I told him. "Of what paper?" "Of the *Christian Courier*," I answered. "Oh, then you'll be able to write some interesting things about the opening of the mosque," he said. I nodded.

Later on at the table I told my wife, who had been elsewhere at the time, about the little exchange. I was delighted that for the first time in my ten years as editor I did not have to explain the name of the paper for which I work. In the past, whenever a stranger asked me the name of our paper and I would say "*Calvinist Contact*," he or she would ask me to repeat the name and then explain it. And how can anyone explain Calvinism in a few words?

What I had experienced in the Kleinburg restaurant felt good. The man had understood immediately all he needed to understand — I worked for a Christian paper and I would have some interesting things to say about the opening of a Muslim place of worship. On top of that, my job description fit the identity I want to carry for myself: I'm a follower of Christ, not of Calvin.

I thought I would share this little episode with you, the reader. Now all we have to do is live up to the glorious name of our Saviour and Lord!

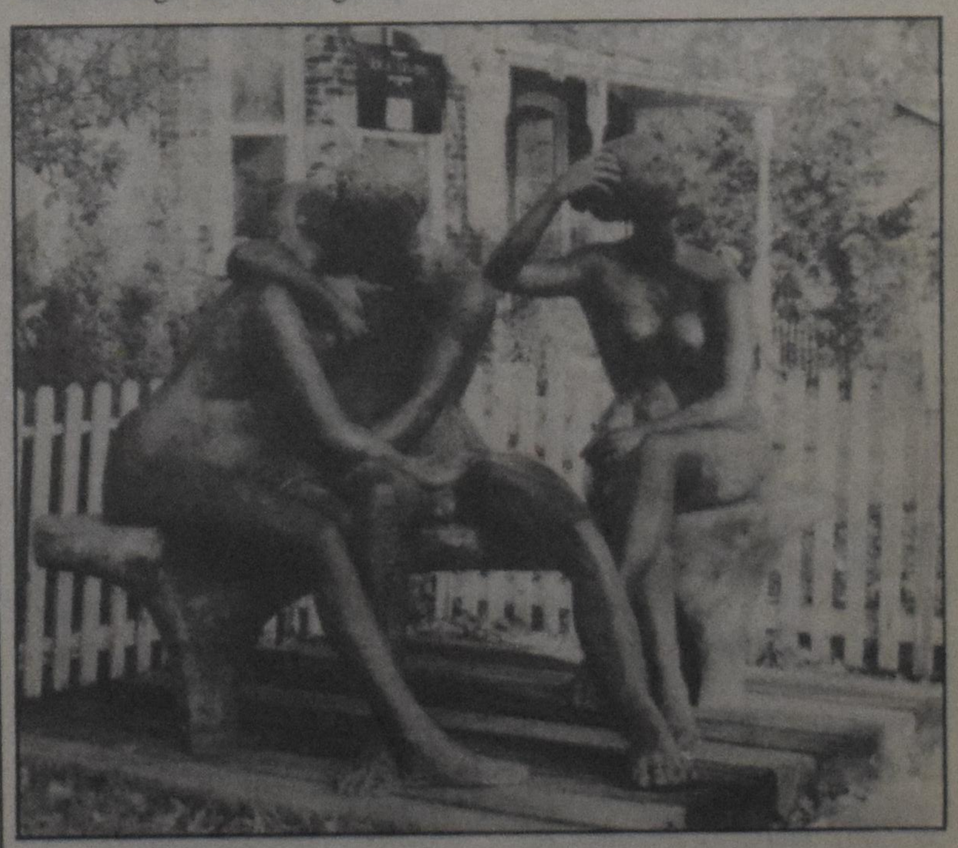


Photo: Bert Witvoet

While the editor and his wife visited Kleinburg, Ont., after their visit to the Bai'tul Islam Mosque, they came across several life-size sculptures by local artist Lea Vivot. This one shows a couple in passionate embrace while another woman seems connected yet oddly disconnected from the pair. Fascinating!

Church Marian Van Til, page-editor

Wycliffe translators complete Omie New Testament

TORONTO—John and June Austing have been Wycliffe Bible translators for many years. John's training began in 1957. He studied at the University of Toronto, Westminster Theological Seminary in Philadelphia and took linguistic training at the University of North Dakota — where he met June, who was studying the same subject.

By 1965 they were both in Papua New Guinea serving the Omie people. A previous Wycliffe team had already developed an alphabet for the Omie language. The Austings spent their time first learning the language, then analyzing the grammar and sound system, translating (with the help of Omie nationals), preparing literacy materials, and conducting trial literacy classes and Bible studies. For 15 years the Austing's work has been supported by, among others, the Willowdale Christian Reformed Church, Willowdale, Ont.

John says, "Cultural differences often make it difficult to explain biblical concepts. Therefore, pictures are important, along with the printed text. But, as in any language, it is the Holy Spirit who opens up God's truth for the reader."

A first edition of the Omie New Testament — *God-Are Jogoru I'Oho* — has just been published. Its cover depicts a horn, traditionally used for calling people together to hear important news, in front of a background cross. The picture symbolizes the Good News that this book brings concerning the crucified and risen Saviour.

This article is based on information supplied by Willowdale Christian Reformed Church and "In Other Words," a publication of Wycliffe Bible Translators.

Religion can be misused in politics

WASHINGTON, D.C. (EP) — Jody Powell, former press spokesperson for the Carter Administration, told Baptist editors that while religion "ought to be some help to us" in dealing with society's problems, it has often been misused for partisan politics. Powell, now chief executive officer of the public relations firm of Powell-Tate, spoke at a press briefing organized by the Baptist Joint Committee on Public Affairs. Powell said our religious convictions should foster "a sense of tolerance, understanding and recognition of humility. In fact, it has brought the opposite, made politics meaner than it already was." He said, "When organized religion gets itself too close to partisan politics, its's the religion that suffers."

Billy Graham finally permitted a stadium crusade in Moscow

Bill Fledderus

MOSCOW — After decades of praying that it might become possible, on October 23 evangelist Billy Graham found himself preaching to a packed house in Moscow's Olympic Stadium.

That night and for the rest of the crusade, Graham preached a message of Christian hope, though he also stressed that being a Christian is not easy, and that accepting Christ is not a decision to be made lightly.

But when he invited those who had committed their lives to Christ to come forward, it became necessary for the sake of safety to urge them not to run. An average of 14,000 people came forward each night — over one quarter of the densely packed crowd, according to the Evangelical Press (EP).

At the final Sunday meeting 50,000 people crowded into the stadium (designed for 35,000) and up to 20,000 more watched outside on a huge TV screen. The Russian military had to be called in to control the crowds of people who were literally trying to crash through the doors of the already crowded arena. One Western journalist observed, "I can think of no other place on earth where people would fight to get the opportunity to hear the Christian message."

Orthodox Church not enthusiastic

The great number of people came despite a pointed lack of enthusiasm from the hierarchy of the Russian Orthodox Church. The Orthodox leader, Patriarch Alexei II, refused to offer an official welcome to Graham, but merely issued a statement saying that he and Graham had spoken, "exchanged opinions on various subjects" and "agreed on the inappropriateness of proselytizing," according to *World* magazine. Alexei reportedly advised Graham to tell people to return to their spiritual roots and "was unwilling to do anything suggesting that he was giving up the Russian Orthodox claims to spiritual leadership," says *World*.

Nonetheless, Graham's crusade went ahead with the largest non-governmental advertising campaign ever placed in the former Soviet Union, a never-before attempted mass mailing of 3.2 million brochures via the Russian postal system and the distribution of more than 50 tons of food and medical supplies.

The primary focus of the crusade was "to communicate the Christian message to the Russian people and participate in the spiritual renewal of a land that has not been able to practice religion freely in over 70 years," according to a news release from the Billy Graham Evangelistic Association.

Graham had previously preached in various parts of Russia in 1982, but not until now was one of his stadium crusades — with its typical year-long preparations among indigenous churches and its post-crusade follow-up — legally possible. Nearly 3,000 churches across the former Soviet Union were involved in crusade-related outreach, including 150 from the greater Moscow region.

As a follow-up to the stadium meetings, 30 training centres will be established in auditoriums and halls across Moscow offering weekly Bible studies for the next three months to provide important teaching and continued fellowship for many new believers.

Committee on abuse begins work

TORONTO (CRCNA) — The Action Committee on Abuse appointed by the Christian Reformed Synod of 1992 has begun its work, according to Mary Vander Vennen, chairperson. The committee's mandate is to educate, suggest policies for prevention of abuse, recommend procedures for churches to follow when abuse is discovered within the congregation, and assemble a directory of materials and of persons throughout North America who are trained to deal with abuse.

The committee would like to hear from any of the pastors and churches who have already begun taking steps in one or more of these directions. If you have initiated a program, a policy regarding youth workers, or any action related to this issue, please contact: Mary Vander Vennen, Christian Counselling Services, 20 Eglington W., Suite 1901, Toronto, M4R 1K8. Or contact: Rev. N. Vander Kwaak, 505 Sundale S.E., Grand Rapids, MI. 49508.

Other committee members are: Tom Zeyl and Jessie Cooper of Ontario, George Hettinger of Ohio, and Carol Topp and Beth Swagman of Michigan. The committee will report to the Synod of 1994.

CANADIAN CHURCH SCENE

Jacob Kuntz

Refugee policies

The editor of the Catholic New Times *is far from happy with the way refugees are treated in Canada. An editorial in the Sept. 27 issue (entitled "Killing Them Softly") says that Canada accepts less than half of one percent of the world's refugee population, and that most of the burden is borne by Third World countries — "Canada also deports a greater percentage of refugees than other Western countries." But a story in the* Toronto Star *(Sept. 20) says that "no other country in the world receives immigrants on a scale even close to ours." Can some Reformed immigration expert enlighten us? Anyway, the CNT editorial concludes with the following plea:*

"Canada is managed by a discreet service called the government. Over the past few years of the constitutional debate this discreet service has planted seeds of suspicion in the country. There are now only a few Canadians who believe that the federal government speaks for the good of all.

"In the course of constitutional discussions Canada has been reduced to an arena in which competing interest groups struggle for their own benefit. In such a situation who will be interested in the rights of refugees?

"The call of this hour is for people of good will to remind Canadians that seeds of suspicion have sunk deep roots into our national psyche. Now is the hour for churches and synagogues to remind Canadians that the stranger is to be welcomed as the Face of God among us.

"This is the day when people of faith must boldly proclaim two commandments: 'Thou shalt not kill.' 'Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.'

Equality?

The Ontario Human Rights Commission has decided to give "spousal benefits" to a homosexual couple. It means that a homosexual relationship is treated as a marriage and receives the same rights under the law. At least two evangelical magazines have commented on this decision. ChristianWeek *of Sept. 22 devoted an editorial to the matter:*

"Why should we be concerned about what is happening? What should we be saying? Perhaps the following.

"All the talk about committed same-sex relationships notwithstanding, the future of the human race depends upon heterosexual relationships for its continuance. That's the natural reality. That too is the Bible's message. That's one reason why it says 'a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and they will become one flesh' (Gen. 2:24). It takes a heterosexual union to produce offspring.

"As a result, despite claims of homosexual couples to the contrary, heterosexual couples will carry the burden of bringing the next generation to maturity. Any government which refuses to prefer heterosexual couples over homosexual couples is inviting trouble.

It is heterosexual couples who must carry the responsibility to bear children. They are the ones who work and save to create a future for children. It is their homes that teach the values and create the environment which allow children to grow up with a sense of direction and a secure identity.

"What kind of statement are governments making if they won't value the role of heterosexual couples any more than lesbian or homosexual couples who won't do any of those things (except in the exceptional instances where they bring a child to the partnership from an earlier heterosexual relationship)?

"There is good reason why the biblical command to 'honour father and mother' is linked to a long life and the promise that it will 'go well with you in the land.' There is a kind of death-wish in a society which cannot see that it must prefer (and truly value) heterosexual marriages over homosexual partnerships."

WHO-AM-I in this new place

In the Mennonite Reporter *of Sept. 21 we found the following poignant story about one of the newcomers among us, a young Laotian woman:*

"Name?"

"Duangkham."

"What?" Full stop. Double take. Deep breath. "Can you spell that?"

"D-U-A-...."

"Whoa! D or T?" The plush, leather-efficient lawyer looks at me helplessly.

"Can you spell her name for me?"

"Strange name to you, eh?"

"Yeah," he admits weakly.

I have come to give moral support to a student who needs help with some documents. I end up giving her a new name. A new way of saying her name. First name first now. Family name last. As if family doesn't matter.

"And God said, 'Your name shall be Abraham...'; 'You shall call his name Immanuel....'"

You shall be somebody. You shall have a name.

In Canada, no one can pronounce her name. Even a lawyer can't spell it. She has lost her name. She is nobody.

One day someone came to her apartment, lifted the knocker. She opened the door; 4' 11" staring up at a 6' 2" Canadian hulk.

"Who am I?" she blundered.

She meant to say, "Who are you?"

Her Laotian tongue couldn't find the words.

"WHO-AM-I" has raven-black hair, soft, shy eyes, a ready, forgiving smile.

"WHO-AM-I" longs to be given her name back. Longs to be somebody.

Jacob Kuntz is a retired Christian Reformed pastor who lives in Brampton, Ont.

Gulf War veterans reporting mysterious ailments

HEIDELBERG, Germany (MCC)—Will the Persian Gulf War spawn its own version of the Agent Orange fiasco in which Vietnam veterans fought for years to induce the U.S. government to pay disability benefits for exposure to that herbicide?

At September 16 Congressional hearings, U.S. Defense Department officials disclaimed linkage between mysterious ailments being reported by about 300 Gulf War veterans and exposure to war-related toxins.

Mennonite Central Committee (MCC) worker Victor Thiessen of Winnipeg, Man., is not so sure, however. Thiessen works with the Military Counseling Network, a small civilian group of counsellors helping U.S. soldiers stationed in Germany with military-related problems. Between the summers of 1990 and 1991 the network assisted with 70 conscientious objector claims and handled over a thousand phone calls.

Chemical exposure the culprit?

Thiessen has recently been counselling a young U.S. Army soldier with a debilitating brain disease she believes is due to exposure to chemicals or drugs during the Gulf War. In the Gulf, Carol Jones (not her real name) was part of a unit given an experimental anti-nerve agent drug. Her commander misread the directions regarding the stated dosage; possible side effects from an overdose of this powerful drug are unknown.

Thiessen reports that Jones was also required to paint tanks and trucks with a highly toxic paint. The military provided her with only a doctor's mask for protection, and did not train her in the paint's use. Among U.S. forces in Germany, anyone using this paint must undergo a month's training and is required to use a special mask.

Neither did Jones receive protective equipment to use when she cleaned Iraqi tanks, from which there was also a danger of chemical contamination.

Jones is not certain which of these caused her disease. Shortly before returning to Germany, however, while still in the Gulf, she began having attacks lasting up to three days. During the attacks, she suffered excruciating headaches and temporarily lost sight and hearing on one side of her face.

Doesn't want responsibility

The Army tried, unsuccessfully, to treat Jones with powerful painkillers. When she was still unable to function at her job, the Army began a medical discharge process in which they hoped to let Jones go with minimal compensation, despite Army regulations entitling her to monthly disability payments for the duration of any disability that began while on duty.

With nowhere else to turn, Jones called the Military Counseling Network.

Thiessen soon learned Jones' case was not unique. Many soldiers in her unit were experiencing headaches, facial tics, hair loss, fatigue and other symptoms. One commented, "We are guinea pigs. I could tell you a hundred horror stories of gross incompetence, including a lot of mistakes with drugs."

The Military Counseling Network contacted veterans' organizations in the United States and began to spread the word of these maladies. Not long after, the Department of Veterans Affairs released reports that it would investigate illnesses that have surfaced since the Gulf War. It blames the illnesses on stress and smoke from oil fires, Thiessen says.

In the September 16 testimony, however, Pentagon experts testified to a congressional subcommittee that no link exists between the Kuwaiti oil fires and the soldiers' ailments.

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Life stories of immigrants can be 'amazing,' say publishers

Bill Fledderus

ST. CATHARINES, Ont. — Reading obituaries can sometimes give the impression that a whole generation is disappearing, taking with it its tales of ecomomic depressions, wars, immigration from Europe and other valuable life experiences.

In order to help aging Canadians record some of those valuable memories two entrepreneurs from St. Catharines, Ont., got together last year to form a small business which publishes memoirs.

A year later, Family Memories Publishing (FMP) now has two books to its credit and three more on the go.

"We feel a sense of urgency in getting some of these family histories on paper before they are lost forever," say Nandy Heule and Pamela Martin, co-owners of FMP.

FMP specializes in what are called "as-told-to" autobiographies. Heule, an experienced journalist, meets with clients for a series of taped interviews. Transcriptions of the interviews are used to prepare a first draft.

"People often prefer to do the writing themselves," says Heule, "which is also fine with us."

Martin, who does much of the editing work, says, "This work is an enjoyable, meaningful use of my talents and my education in English literature and linguistics."

Editing, designing and printing a manuscript can take from three months to a year at FMP, depending on the length. Most clients request about 25 copies for immediate family members and friends. Since FMP operates as a vanity press, clients themselves and/or their families are responsible to pay for and distribute their books.

"Publishing memoirs gets you involved with people's lives. You build up a trust with each other. It's very enjoyable, and it's also important because together we are recording history," says Heule. "Some of the stories are amazing."

Writing memoirs is also a good way to preserve a testimony of our parents' faith, she adds. "Christians often know that their parents live by faith, but they have little clue how the parents have experienced that faith through the years. Memoirs can help relate that experience."

News Comment

Why some eastern Germans fear foreigners

Wallace Bratt

Recent deadly attacks by young eastern Germans on foreigners seeking political asylum were unforeseen by observers and remain very unsettling. Early this summer the problem surfaced with frightening intensity in Rostock, on the Baltic. Since then, a number of additional eastern German cities have witnessed similar slashing outbursts against foreigners. The attacks have been vicious and their perpetrators unrepentant. True, western Germans have been guilty of similar assaults, but the intensity of their resentment apparently does not match that seen in the East.

Some eastern Germans have been quick to identify social and economic problems presumably fueling these attacks in their part of the country. In an attempt to explain what is happening, they point to the malaise of disoriented young people with a bleak future who have joined their parents in unemployment lines. The bitter frustration of such young people, these observers suggest, is intensified by the perception that the former East Germany has only traded communist exploitation for a Western, capitalist variant. The paradise they hoped for has not materialized. Many of them are unconvinced that they are better off now than they were before November of 1989. It is this disillusionment, we are told, which provokes their brutal and cowardly behaviour—and the sympathy some East German adults apparently feel for them.

Lack of honesty

Such explanations, though partially true, are incomplete. The roots of current eastern German xenophobia are also to be found in the communist political, social and educational policy of the years 1949-1989.

For example, official communist policy tended to promote only an oblique confrontation with the German racism which led to the holocaust. In both East German schools and in the propaganda commonly heard at places like the Buchenwald Memorial, the government stressed that Nazi atrocities were the products of Western fascism, that *they* were responsible for what happened, and not *we*. Only in the church were there calls to repentance; society at large somehow was not forced to confront its past racism, and thus may be ill-equipped to deal with its present racism now.

Communist apartheid

In addition, despite official communist dogma regarding the international character of the movement, East Germany was a tightly segregated society. Although the presence of some 425,000 Soviet troops meant that they were visible in every corner of the country, neither official Soviet nor East German policy allowed for personal contact between the two peoples. At meetings of local chapters of German-Soviet Friendship Societies, the Germans sat at tables on one side of the room and the Soviets at tables on the other side. At the end of the meeting, each group went its own way. Pious platitudes celebrating "our Soviet brothers" did anything but result in interaction between Germans and Russians.

Nor did the situation change when Vietnamese and Mozambiquan guest workers were imported to work in places like the Wartburg automobile factory in Eisenach. Though the government provided these workers with adequate housing, they were physically separated from their East German "hosts."

In short, once the Wall fell, eastern Germans simply had not practice in rubbing elbows with members of other races and nationalities. School children and workers alike may have been officially encouraged to solidarity with oppressed peoples in far-away countries, but they had precious little actual contact with non-Germans in their own. Their inability to travel freely beyond the Wall only intensified their isolation.

Church had little influence.

East German churches made their share of mistakes during their time behind the Wall, but they did attempt to cultivate sensitivity to both the horrors of the German past and the challenges of present-day ecumenicity and brotherhood.

It has become clear since 1989, however, that the church did not have significant religious influence on the lives of most East Germans. They may have celebrated the church's role in the quiet revolution of 1989, but its appeals to Christian brotherhood seem to have gotten lost in the aggressive public secularism fostered by official policy — or in the quieter private secularism resulting from simple loss of faith.

Before the Wall fell, perhaps long before, East Germany had become a radically secular society. Appeals to Christian morality may have gone largely unheard in that land behind the Wall. Nor is there reason to think they will take root now. And calls to common decency may have no greater chance there than they do in most parts of the world.

Photo: Focus-Matrix

Neo-Nazi skinheads take to the streets.

It would be perverse to attempt to excuse eastern German racism by appealing to East Germany's unhappy past. Sin is sin, and a selfish disregard for the needs and rights of others is an offence to humanity and to its Lord. However, an awareness of that past may help us better understand what has been going on in that region since early summer. It may also stimulate us to probe our own hearts.

Wallace Bratt is professor of German at Calvin College in Grand Rapids, Mich.

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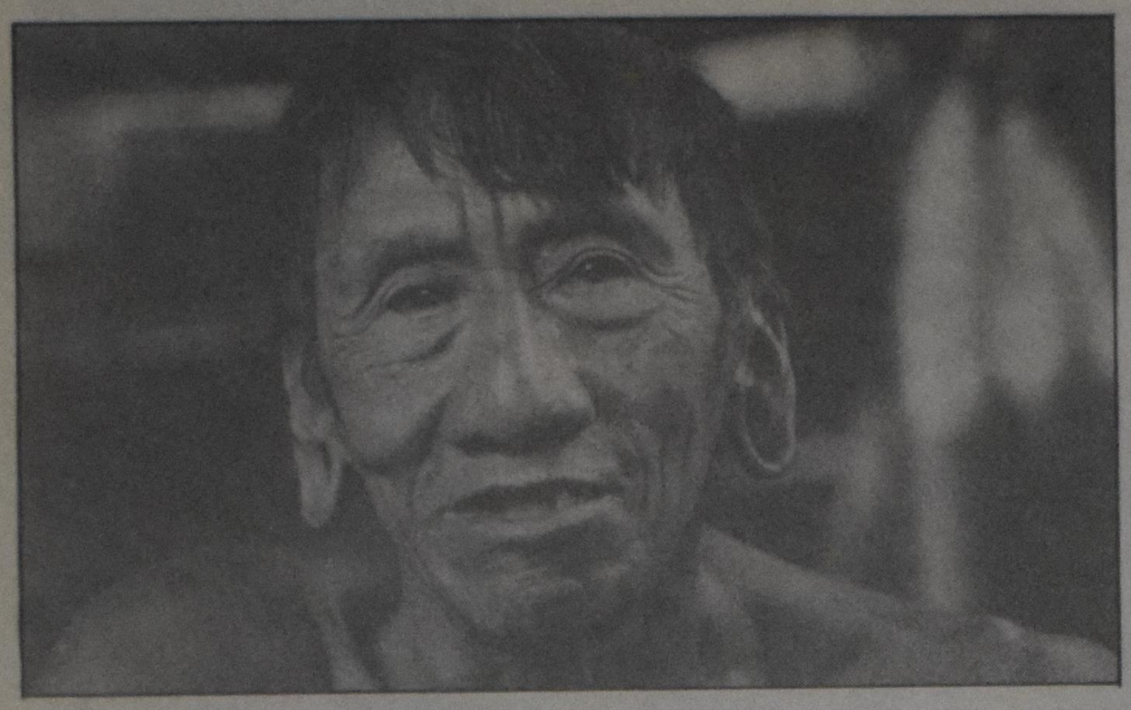
Feature



Geketa was one of the Waorani who speared the five missionary men in the jungles of Ecuador in 1956.

We're people, not savages!

A story told by a Waorani called Geketa and recorded by anthropologist Jim Yost.

Me, I'm the old one around here. So here I am to tell you everything once and for all. My father was killed when my mother was still pregnant with me. They speared my father, and the king vulture picked his bones. I was born on the Mosquito River. As a child I grew up carrying the knowledge of my father's death in my soul. I was nourished on that idea and always wanted to avenge his death.

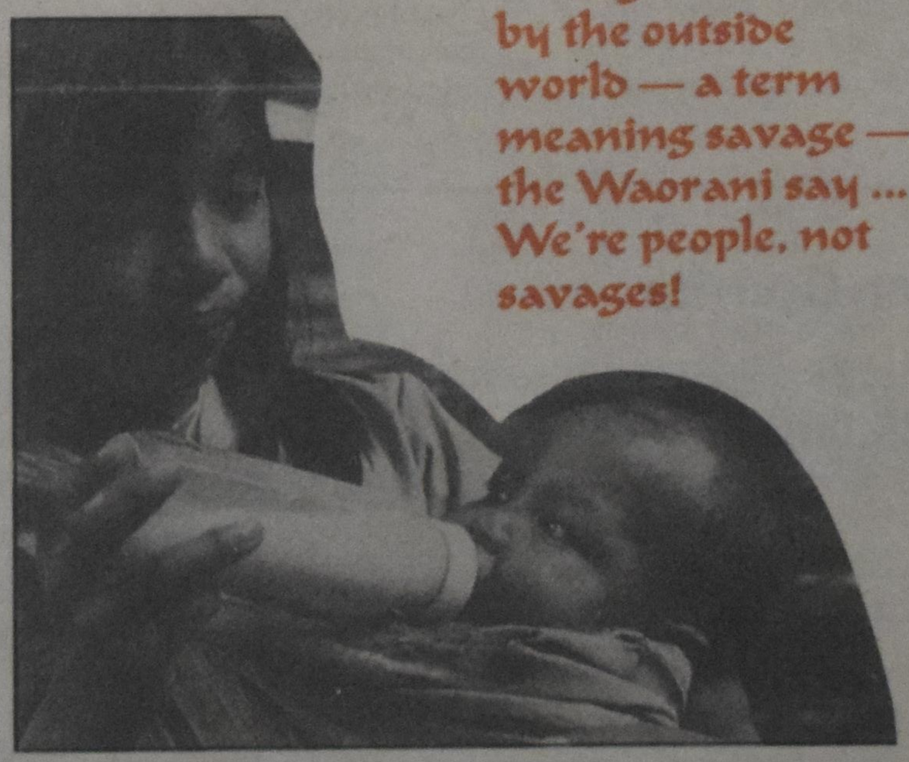
One day my brother Cowae climbed up a tree looking for palm fruit. He knocked the fruit to the ground, but when he went to pick it up, a snake bit him on the hand. In a little while he died. My mother buried Cowae and to me she said, "Why should you live when my oldest son is dead? You are small and worthless. I'm going to throw you away!" After that she didn't carry me in the sling any more. I cried. My sister Game said, "Don't cry. I'll carry you." If my sister hadn't taken me, I wouldn't be alive today.

My friend Itaeca and I were born about the same time, and we went around together through the forest, blowgunning toucans and other birds. One day Itaeca and I were in the garden with my mother when someone came spearing. They killed our whole group just like you blowgun a family of toucans in the nest. I fled with my mother into the forest, without taking anything. No fire. Nothing. We just froze at night. No manioc drink. We got hungrier and hungrier. The mosquitos nearly ate us up. We headed away from all the killing and for two years we lived alone out there. Spearing scattered everyone. Back in those days that's the way we lived.

I was always scared that the *cowodi* (outsiders), were going to come and shoot me. My mother said, "All *cowodi* are cannibals. They'll eat you. Don't ever leave footprints down by the rivers, or they will track you. Stay only up on the ridges." But if we did run into a *cowodi*, he was as good as dead. Then more *cowodi* would come and secretly kill and steal our children. Back and forth we killed. Together we died.

Moipa was the worst! The *cowodi* came in and wiped out a bunch of Moipa's family, and in anger Moipa turned on all of us. We fled. Then when Moipa speared the *cowodi* he began to get really enraged and went to the bad. From then on he became a committed killer. My childhood friend, Itaeca, joined him, and together they went around killing.

We had to flee from Moipa and Itaeca. They speared my sisters and my brother and threatened to kill me. They pursued us down to the mouth of the Dayuno River. We fled this way for five days, scarcely stopping to rest, with no food.



In the old days, this baby, a twin, probably would hae been killed. Now it's being cared for by another family

Long called Auca by the outside world — a term meaning savage — the Waorani say ... We're people, not savages!

After that, we went far away across another river, clear to where it is nothing but tiny streams. There we built our houses, chopped down trees, cleared and planted our gardens. Everything we lived on — manioc, bananas, peanuts, sweet potatoes — we planted, and it grew well.

One day Nemonca came running up saying, "Ima has speared again. Ima is the one who killed your father!" I reacted in fury! On behalf of my father, I had always wanted to carry weapons and kill Ima. I told them we had to kill Ima or he would kill us. We then went and found Ima's group. It was getting dark. We just went running from house to house, killing whoever we could. Ima was swinging in his hammock in the longhouse, singing. Nemonca and Kimo burst in and speared him. I saw someone run to the far end of the house. I speared him. Then I whirled around and got another, and whirling again, still another. We set the house on fire. Ima was burned up with the house. That's the way we did it long ago.

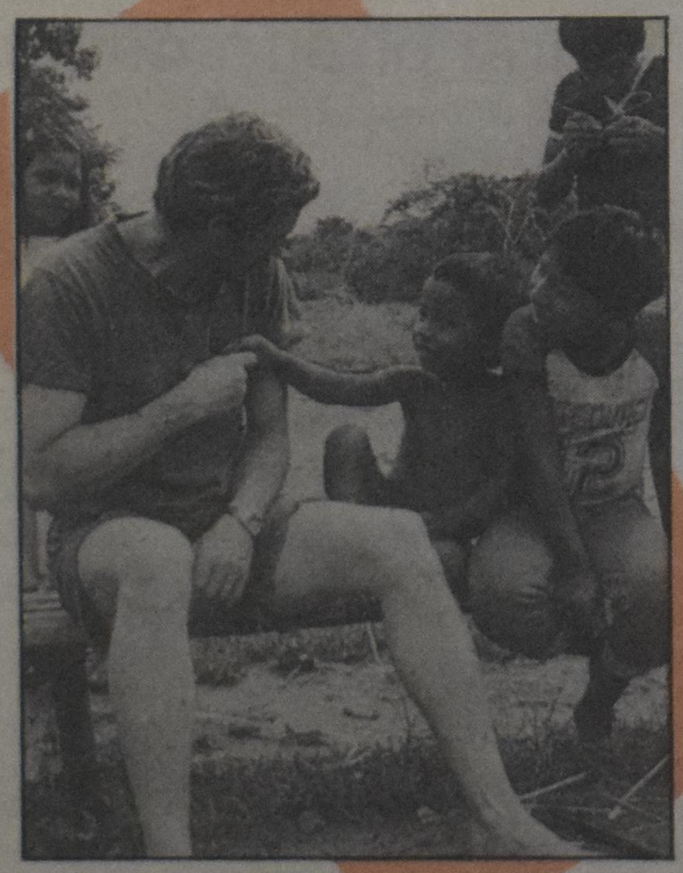
One day a plane flew over us. It circled and it circled, "Wooo, wooo." They dropped clothes and knives to us from

Waorani men used blowguns for hunting birds.

the plane. Then they called "Come, come, come with us." Nampa realized Dayuma, his sister, must still be alive, living with the cowodi because they were calling in our own language.

The plane returned and landed on the sandbar. A few from our group went to meet them.

Later the next night, Nampa flew into a rage over a wedding he disapproved. Casting around for someone to vent his anger on, he ran into his house, grabbed all his spears and yelled to me, "Come on, let's go and kill! Right here, close by, are *cowodi*. Now here's our chance. Let's kill them." Gimadi, one of the women, said, "Yes, the airplane has cannibals in it, and they're coming to eat our heads." Then we went off with our spears to kill.



Dr. Jim Yost talks with Waorani children.

The *cowodi* were on the sandbar calling to us. Nampa ran at one man with a spear. The man shot. Nampa and the man fell right there on the sandbar. We speared another, and even as they were running, I speared two more of them. The last *cowodi* called out to us, "Don't spear, don't spear!" and we understood. "We just came to meet you. We aren't going to kill you. Why are you killing us?" He was standing on a log jutting out of the river when Kimo ran a spear through his chest and he fell into the water. Then we went home, burned our house, escaped into the forest and lived. Looking back on it now, I feel I really did badly. The *cowodi* weren't trying to do bad; they were trying to do good.

Later a plane started coming again, dropping gifts, machetes, clothes. And we said, "Oh, it's out of love for us that they are dropping that." When they started dropping gifts, we realized they weren't going to hurt us and we said, "That's enough spearing. Let's go and meet them." So my wife and others met the *cowodi*, and they came here. Our first really good meeting with the *cowodi* was at that time. Now we and the *cowodi* go around together. Meeting together, we live.

But when the *cowodi* spoke lots about God, we listened and we understood. We took God's speaking seriously. We decided not to kill each other any more. We've stopped living in fear. We aren't doing the kind of talking that results in killing.

Believing in God, we now live. Those who don't believe, they live killing. The ones who believe, they live *waaponi*, caring and sharing.

Just this last year, some young Waorani kids speared and killed my sister Game, the one who saved my life by carrying me in the sling. They killed her, just like my ancestors used to do. I was really angry because of what they did to my sister. In the old days, I would have killed them immediately. Now, believing in God, I'm not going to do that any more. We buried her, and I grieved, and now we'll go on living.

The *cowodi* call us Auca, savages, but we're people! We're Waorani.

Wycliffe editor's note:

Caught in a web of revenge killing, it was "spear or be speared" for the Waorani. Then, two years after the missionaries were killed, Rachel Saint, sister of one, and Elisabeth Elliot, widow of another, contacted the Waorani. Dayuma, a Waorani girl who had fled the violence of her people ten years earlier, taught Rachel her language and helped make the friendly contact.

This article, by itself, might imply that nothing was good before Christianity came, and all is good since then. Thankfully, the killing has stopped, but regretfully, other problems abound. It's not all rosy today, nor was it all negative before.

Dr. James Yost, anthropologist with SIL, lived with his family among the Waorani in the '70s. The Yosts now live in Colorado.This article reprinted with permission from "In Other Words: A Wycliffe Bible Translators Publication," July/August 1992.

Review Article

Survey of teens seeks the Lord's voice in a strange land

A review article

Curt Gesch

"Don't gulp! Eat slowly — small bites — and chew each bite at least 40 times."

Mother's advice also applies to the reader of *Teen Trends: A Nation in Motion*,by Reginald Bibby and Don Posterski, two prominent Christian observers of the Canadian scene. The two — one a sociologist and the other a youth worker — reflect on the results of a survey they conducted involving a cross-section of Canadian teens (4,000 of them) from 200 high schools across the country.

The number of illustrative and enlightening examples from teens and comments by the authors is simply exhausting. Allow me to cite just a few examples:

What the authors said: *"When it comes to what young poeple want out of life, freedom and friendship rank first and second respectively...."*

"...Some 35 percent of Canadian young women plan to stay home and raise their children for a least a few years. Perhaps surprisingly, 30 percent of young males say they have the same hope. Presumably, the two sets of aspirants will not be married to each other!"

"Some 87 percent of teenagers say they approve of sex before marriage when people love each other...."

"Only about 20 percent think it is important to live out religious faith in everyday life...."

"Canadian young people have four dominant concerns: the pressure to do well at school, the feeling of never having enough time, lack of money, and wondering what they will do when they graduate."

What teens said: *"Canada is dying and the government isn't smart enough to save it. I, a little 16-year-old, could do a better job."*

"We are a privileged people to be able to be living in Canada where we don't have to worry about when the next bomb is going to drop or where our next meal will come from. The only bad thing about Canadians is that we take more than we give and take it for granted."

Clear and witty presentation

The book exhibits many outstanding features for non-professional readers. For one thing, the two authors do not attempt to merge styles: Part 1 is by Bibby and Part 2 is by Posterski. A clear "voice" is thus maintained in each section.

Second, the selection of quotations, the presentations of tables and the summary of findings is extraordinarily clear. It is not the soul-less mass of abstraction one often associates with compilations of sociological data.

Third, the authors manage to "sing the Lord's song in a strange land." They are not afraid to implicitly or explicitly make charitable, insightful and/or witty judgements that clearly indicate a value system which C.C. readers will recognize as biblically based.

For example, Posterski notes: "Anyone who breathes also believes. Whether or not people are conscious of it, everyone operates with a hierarchy of values, a code of ethics, moral standards and a system of beliefs." Yet I could not detect statements in the books that indicate an anti-Christian desire to bludgeon secular, Muslim, Jewish or other readers.

Teens mirror adults

Despite the mass of information collected in the book, one is still tempted to cite the single most important insight gained. For me, it is this: that before one decries the state of the adolescents in our society, one should notice how closely their opinions, feelings and actions mirror those of the adults who presumably trained them. Before one condemns the "sins of youth" one might paraphrase a psalm: "Sins of middle-age remember not, nor my trespasses record."

Finally, a note for those interested in Christian education: The chapter on "The Role of Education" is packed with wisdom.

About creativity, for example: *"Effective teachers inspire creativity in their students. They keep their students second-guessing about what comes next. They reward the unorthodox and aren't all that concerned about colouring that swerves outside the lines."*

This chapter is accessible, practical, and worth the price of the book for teachers, parents and school boards alike.

Wanted: story

What is missing from this book is *story*, even anecdote. If future books of this type are planned, I would suggest the authors consider the kind of story- based approach that former C.C. writer Adrian Peetoom used in his column, or the type of humourously insightful anecdote used so sucessfuly by Tony Campolo in *Who Switched the Price Tags?*.

I highly recommend *Teen Trends*. But savour it, as you would a fine wine, good conversation or Calvin's commentaries.

As Posterski states, "...Adults who work with young people will serve them well if they invite them to take time to pursue the fourth R — reflection." We serve well Bibby, Posterski and the teens they surveyed if we, too, reflect thoughtfully and prayerfully on this book.

Teen Trends: A Nation in Motion. *Reginald W. Bibby and Donald C. Posterski. Toronto: Stoddart Publishing Co. Limited. 1992. 334 pages.*

Curt Gesch teaches at Bulkley Valley Christian High School, Smithers, B.C., and is CEO of Huppelen Productions. He is described by a friend as "that wierd guy who likes teenagers."

Adolescence: a cultural phenomenon

Marguerite Veenstra

Adolescence. That one word is enough to strike terror into the hearts of many parents. It seems that one day, all of a sudden, their child becomes a stranger : dressing like an alien, speaking a different language (except when it comes to the car), and basically living in a different world. Yet, most of these parents just accept it when this happens, believing it to be "just one of those things," that they must live through, never once assuming it wasn't always like this.

Well, it's time to set some people straight. To do this, let's go back a few hundred years. Just before the Industrial Revolution, cottage industry was the thing. People worked at home, or on their farms, and no one went away to work, except for apprenticing. Kids had no time to be adolescents, at least not in the way they are today. As soon as children could carry buckets they were out slopping the hogs. As soon as they could chop wood, that's what they were doing. Sun-up till sun-down, working right beside their parents. And when they turned 13 or so, they had been working the same as their parents for two or more years. Girls and boys often married early, starting the whole thing over again. Where was the period of "rebellion" and "identity crisis?" It wasn't there. It had no reason or time to be.

But then along came the Industrial Revolution, and along with it a whole new way of life. Families forsook their farms for little huts in the cities. Fathers (and sometimes mothers) worked long days away from the home.

And what were the kids to do? Sure, they went to school (some of them, anyway), but what about after school, before their parents came home? Some of them probably had chores to do in the house, but the majority of them started "hanging out," to put it in modern terminology. No longer were kids working the fields or looms till dusk, only to come home, eat, and collapse into bed.

With time on their hands, kids started forming their own little groups. Vandalism and mischief became more and more common. Leather jackets sprouted off their backs, and cigarettes out of their mouths (oops! getting a bit ahead of history). Frowns and sneers became the only accepted facial expressions.

Anyway, the whole point of

continued on p. 15 ....

Those down days

Gordon R. Lean

Down days. We all have them. Days in which, for some unknown reason, our spirits sink to the cellar. We cast about for some human or tangible reasons for the descent of our feelings, and they're just not there. Everything, outwardly at least, is near perfect.

The children are going through a "just like angels" stage. We don't have a lot of debts. The washing machine and lawn mower are both working. One's spouse is certainly not inattentive. The bank where our savings are stashed is fairly stable. And the roses are blooming — everywhere.

So what's wrong with us? Better still, what's wrong with me?

Try as I will, I can't find the answer. I'm depressed, and that's that. But admitting depression is the first step to getting out of it. I must admit depression the same as I would a headache or a pain in my left hip.

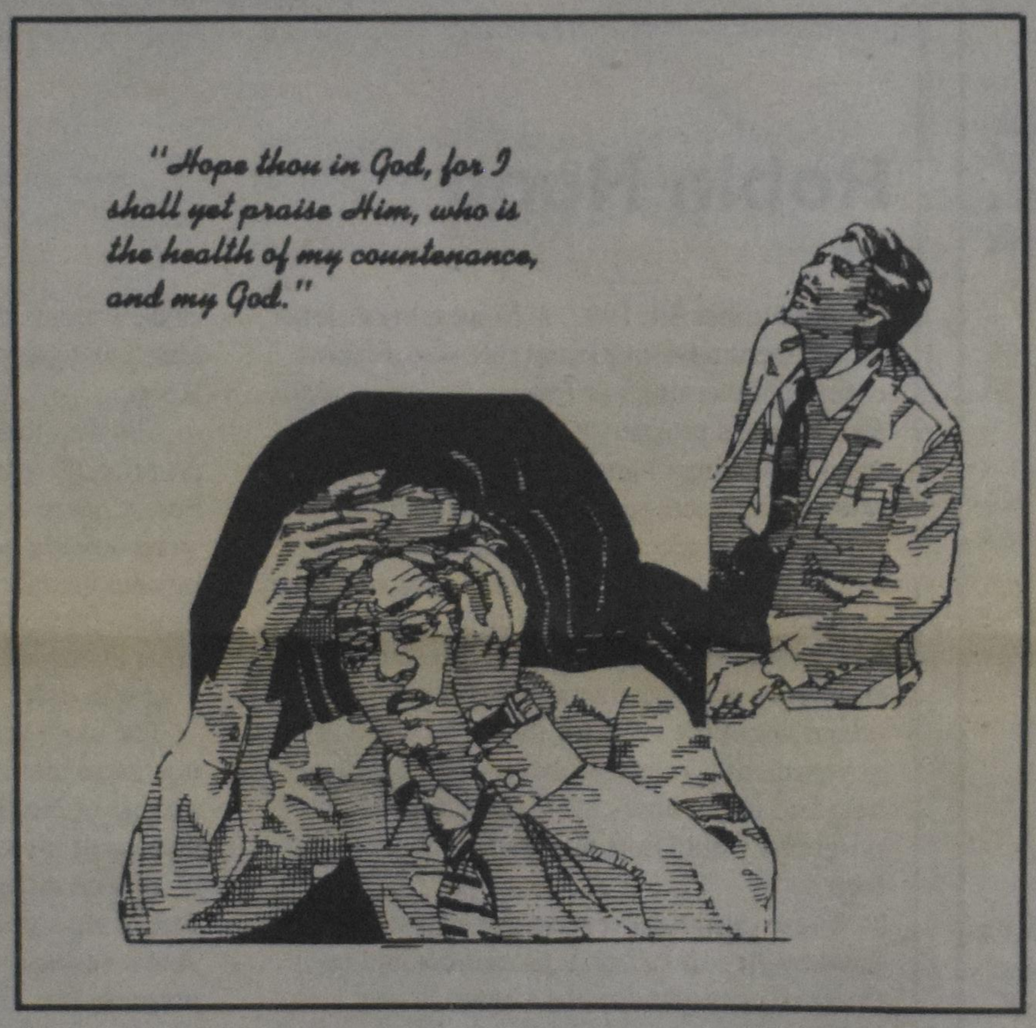
Pressure from outside

However, the thing that is frustrating is that, being a child of God, I tend to feel that my depression is a grievous sin against him, an indication that I'm doubting his Word, or his promises. I've been told I must wear a constant smile, even when my bowels are dragging. I rebel against the idea simply because I recognize in it a form of hypocrisy. Putting on a glad front when I don't feel glad doesn't solve my problem. It compounds it.

Like Nehemiah of old (Neh. 2: 1-2), I fear to appear before people not looking the way they think I should. And that makes me a slave to others, which I cannot allow.

Probe a little

Now I don't know about you, but when I hit a "down" day I try to make use of it. I ask myself questions like these: Is there something I've failed to do that I ought to get at? Even just a simple decision on some matter may produce a more positive attitude. Is there someone toward whom I have a bad attitude? Correcting this and seeking God's forgiveness may do wonders. How's my general health? Spurgeon, one of the great preachers of the past, had bouts of depression due to his gout. And while God can be very real and very supportive during down times, he very seldom offers quick fixes.



Am I wrestling with a problem that will not go away? Does the future seem to hold no release from it? Am I frustrated because my every effort to solve my problem meets with failure? God will not do for me what is *my* duty, but he will often do for me what I can not.

Accept it, use it

Expect depression. It's normal. It's the body's emotional system calling a halt. God built it into you so that you wouldn't blow up. Accept it like medicine. But don't let it run you. Don't let it become an excuse for laziness or for withdrawing from life. Reject its rule over you. Use it, lest it provide fuel for more depression, which can develop into a vicious circle, with you as its victim.

David, Israel's sweet singer and king, had bouts of depression. His face was haggard with sorrow and wet with tears (Ps. 42: 3). Psalms 42 and 43 tell us that even in the very midst of his down time his confidence was in God, that God would eventually bring back a smile to his lips and gladness to his soul. Thus, to David, depression was not a time of losing faith but a time of exercising it.

Depression was a fact, a reality, even in David's life. But another reality kept him going. It was this same man, bowed with weakness and with sorrow that cried, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God" (Ps. 42: 11).

Light and darkness

Someone has said, "Only idiots are happy all the time." Normal, sensible, practical — yes, and spiritual — people all experience depression, and for many differing reasons, sometimes with no apparent or recognized reason. It just comes, and must be accepted as one accepts the shining skies overhead and the song of birds in the trees. The darkness and the light are both alike to God. So they must be to me if I would walk in faith and not be moved.

The quoting of Scripture might not produce instant joy or release from the problem. It might, instead, produce guilt, especially if the depression remains. Honest self-appraisal, plus the confidence that God will be sufficient in the trial will not only help me to profit from the depression, but will give strength to eventually put it behind me and emerge with a smiling face — a real one.

This is what worked for Paul. Why not for us?

Gordon Lean lives in Fort Saskatchewan, Alta.

Make use of our revamped calendar of events on page 22

Adolescence

... continued from p. 14

while the teen years were and will always be times of adjustment, much of what goes along with the term "adolescence" has sprung from our own culture.

So let's stop excusing rude, destructive behaviour as a fact of life. Instead, let's be understanding. But let's also help adolescents to find other, more constructive ways to spend those "alien" years — so we can stop this "brown sugar" about adolescents as being "naturally" weird, rebellious and hostile.

Marguerite Veenstra is a former student at Bulkley Valley Christian High School, now studying at The King's College, Edmonton.

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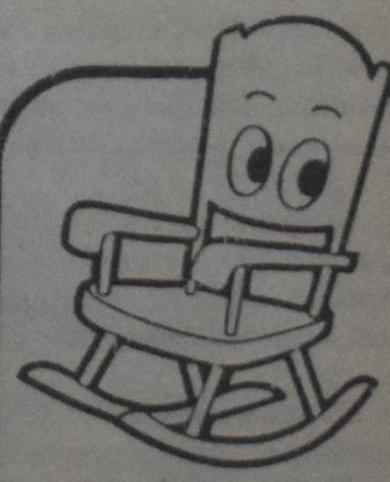

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Dordt College strongly encourages applications from women, minorities, and disabled persons.

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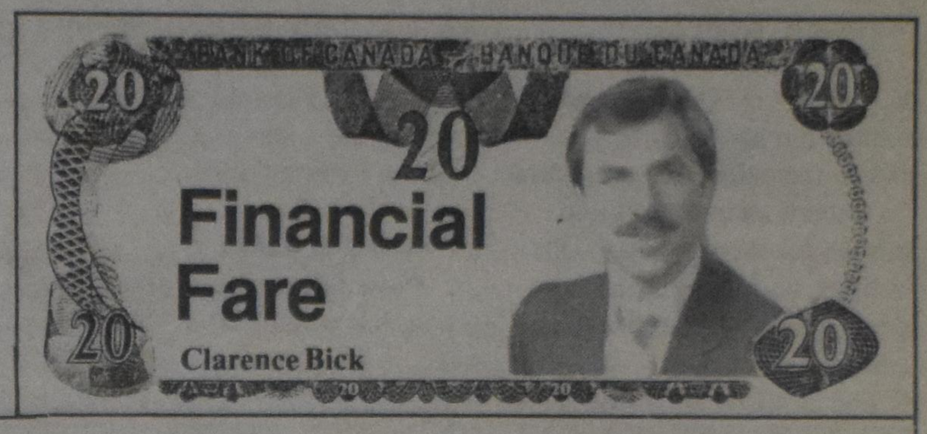

Robin Hood

On October 30, 1992, a 20-member federal government advisory panel released a report entitled "Inventing our future: An action plan for Canada's prosperity." The report calls for many sweeping changes, including the reduction of taxes and government spending.

The report received many criticisms. The call for cuts in government spending were met by the usual condemnations from many different special interest groups representing the recipients of government programs. They talked about the need for the "free" delivery of government services to those who need the help and about how cuts in government programs would hurt those who can least afford it.

These criticisms remind me of a story related by Arthur Laffer, a prominent and influential economist in the United States. Laffer is most famous for the development of the "Laffer curve," which quantified the relationship between tax rates and taxes collected. With this graph he showed how an increase in tax rates causes tax revenue to drop.

While this relationship does not seem reasonable at first glance, he explained that tax is a discouragement to work and causes sectors of the economy to move underground. We all know of people who work for cash to avoid income tax. It is well documented that the underground economy grows as tax rates rise.

Hoodlum was first welfare agency

Laffer related the current state of government to the story of Robin Hood, whom he describes as one of the first social welfare agencies. Robin Hood's job was to rob the rich and give to the poor. For those who think of income tax as an expropriation of private wealth by the public sector, the analogy is a good one.

While Robin Hood's forced transfer of wealth may appear socially responsible and even noble, it is actually a bad method because it treats the symptoms but not the problem. Let's go back to Laffer's version of Robin Hood.

The first time that wealth was "expropriated" from a traveller in Sherwood Forest, there was a pure transfer of wealth. But word quickly got around and wealthy businesspeople began to hire small armies to protect their goods. Often they sent their goods great distances around the outside of Sherwood Forest in order to avoid theft.

The extra costs of transportation and protection were inevitably passed on to the poor consumers of Nottingham who could least afford these cost increases.

It is no different in today's economy. Businesspeople make profits by keeping costs below revenues. Taxes (be they income tax, property tax, GST, PST, excise tax, etc.) represent a cost of production. Inevitably these costs are transferred to the consumer. If the costs cannot be passed on, the businesses will cease to function because there will eventually be no profits to sustain them.

Prosperity crucial to social justice

Without the wealth generated by an economy, there is no ability to help those who truly need help. Prosperity is crucial to social justice. Studies conclusively show that economic growth rates are directly related to rates of savings and investment. Economic growth rates are inversely proportional to tax rates (since taxes are amounts of wealth that are not invested by the private sector).

I think it would serve the voters of this country well to consider the story of Robin Hood the next time our politicians propose to buy our votes with the wealth they first have to expropriate.

Clarence Bick is a financial planner in Ancaster, Ont.

Peter and Marja are IN

Dear P & M:

There are several instances in the Bible referring to "an evil spirit of the Lord" (e.g. 1 Sam. 16:14). This seems like such a contradiction. Can you please explain these passages?

Dear Biblical Contradiction:

While God is not the author of sin, ultimately everything is under his control. That's why the Scriptures do not hesitate to say that God *hardened* Pharaoh's heart (Ex. 9:12), *sent* an evil spirit between Abimelech and the citizens of Shechem (Judges 9:23) and *took* his Spirit from King Saul (1 Sam. 16:14).

In each situation, however, the context tells us that human disobedience was already at work. In Pharaoh's case, we are repeatedly told that this Egyptian ruler hardened his own heart. In Abimelech's case, there is the background of the wholesale slaughter of Gideon's 70 sons and the treachery of the citizens who supported this violent act. In King Saul's case, he kept Amalekite plunder for himself in wilful disregard of the Lord's specific instructions.

The story of Job is helpful here. You will recall that Satan asked to afflict Job and that God said, "Very well," and allowed him to do it. Despite granting permission, God did set limits for Satan. Again, God is not the author of sin even though he remains in control, even over Satan.

Jesus' teachings are also helpful. In Matthew 12:43-45 he describes a heart that has been swept clean of evil spirits. Then he warns us about the danger of keeping that heart unoccupied. When we don't welcome the Holy Spirit into our hearts, the evil spirit that left in the first place will return with seven more.

All of these passages and their difficulties are enlightened by Psalm 51:10-12. In this well-known, powerful prayer, David acknowledges the fine balance between human responsibility and God's sovereignty in the matter of the human heart and the spirit or spirits that inhabit it.

Create in me a pure heart, O God,
and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me from your presence
or take your Holy Spirit from me.
Restore to me the joy of your salvation
and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me.

Your question shows us that you are a very perceptive student of the Bible. Thanks for asking a very tough biblical question. We don't think we can fully understand or explain how or why God employs evil spirits to do his will. We only know that he *allows* and *permits* evil. And we know that he has set everything up in such a way that evil will be overcome by good (Rom. 12:21).

Although it seems that the Bible presents us with a contradiction about God, we think that you have actually encountered a paradox. May God give you the faith to live with the mystery of two seemingly opposite truths which we're challenged to believe simultaneously.

Write to: P & M,
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Peter and Marja Slofstra are a pastor and wife team living in St. Catharines, Ont. They are assisted by an advisory panel consisting of Herman de Jong, Bill Lidkea, Tom Zeyl, Marian Van Til and Bert Witvoet.

Variety of events commemorate the Holocaust

TORONTO (JFGT)—Speeches, films and other presentations relating to the Holocaust are now occurring throughout Toronto, as part of the 12th annual Holocaust education week (Nov. 5-18), organized by the Jewish Federation of Greater Toronto.

"Our goal is awareness," says Pnina Spetgang, director of the Holocaust remembrance committee. "Through awareness we ensure that we never forget."

"Holocaust education is not just a religious issue or just a Jewish problem, but a humanitarian necessity," she adds. "We live in a multicultural city where prejudicial hatred is growing. It must be stopped in its infancy."

Dr. Irwin Cotler, a human rights activist, opened the week with a presentation entitled "Holocaust denial and war crimes revisionism."

Films dramatize reality

Later in the week Aja Rosmus, a Bavarian housewife who managed to research the Nazi past of her home town despite a conspiracy of silence, will speak about her experiences.

Rosmus' story is dramatized in the witty film *Nasty Girl, das schreckliche Mädchen*. Other films to be shown included *The Restless Conscience*, a critically-acclaimed documentary about resistance to Hitler within Germany itself, and *Europa, Europa*, an Academy Award winner about the attempts of a young Jewish man to save himself from the Nazis.

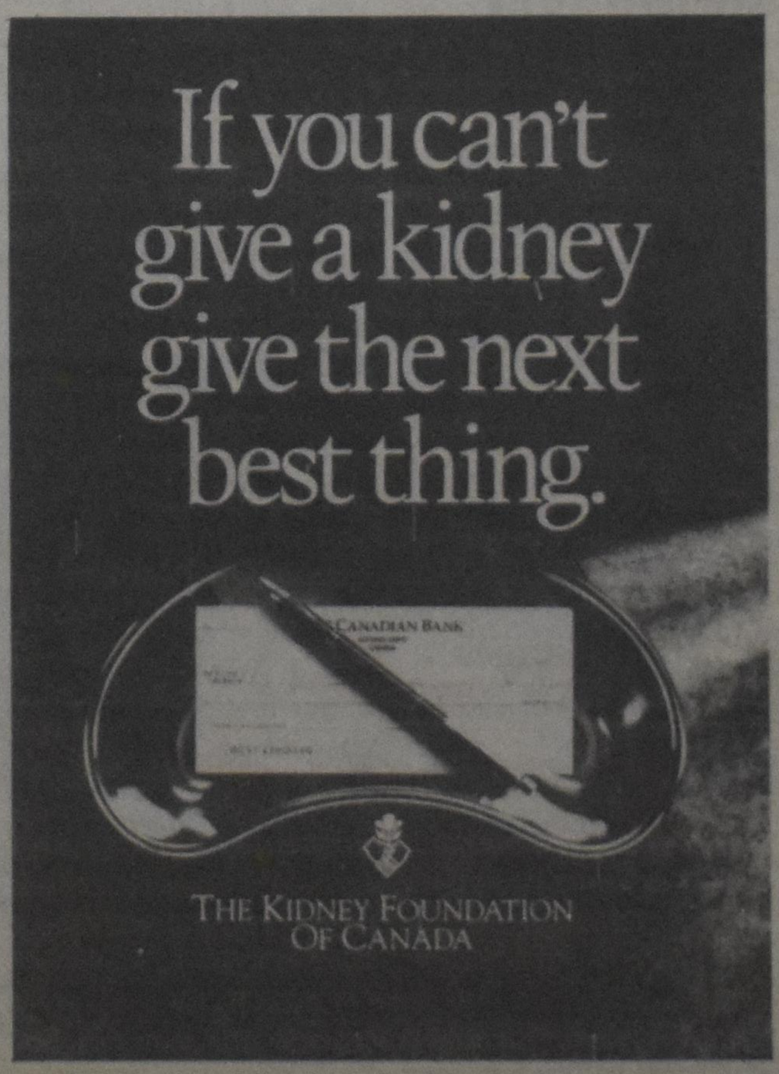
Arie Van Mansum of Ottawa, formerly an active member of the Dutch Resistance movement, is also scheduled to speak. (His story is told in the 1991 book *A Friend Among Enemies* by Janet Keith).

About 30 presentations are scheduled at various locations, including discussions of topics such as "Implications of contemporary racial problems," "Roots of Christian anti-semitism" and "The new Germany: reflections and challenges."

Don't overlook our special offer to those who have never susbcribed or whose subscription lapsed more than a year ago.

A subscription at $25 constitutes a savings of $12.50!

This offer is valid until December 31, 1992.



Meditation/Books

Friends of God

Wayne Brouwer

Fading

"When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who know my way" (Ps. 142: 3).

Tinkerbell was the tiny, delightful sprite in *Peter Pan* who drifted between the worlds of the senses and magic, sprinkling "fairy dust" to make the children fly.She sparkled around Peter Pan as a comrade adventurer.

Once, on a "Wonderful World of Disney" broadcast, Tinkerbell ingested some poison. There was nothing to be seen of her, tiny thing that she was, other than the brightness of the little light that she was. But with the poison her light began to fade. There she was on our TV screen, growing dim and pulsing with a weakening glow.

Miracles

But miracles can happen in fairy tales and on TV, and Peter Pan turned to the audience. "You've got to believe in Tinkerbell! Everyone out there, clap your hands together now, and show Tinkerbell you believe in her!"

Across North America, the children of all ages must have clapped. Tinkerbell's light flickered brighter, but the strength wasn't there. "Somebody's not clapping, somebody doesn't believe," shouted Peter Pan at his TV audience. "If you don't believe, Tinkerbell will die!"

So everybody was asked to clap again, and Tinkerbell's light grew strong and bright. She flitted up with grace and thanks, and the tale could continue.

She had almost faded away away, but we believed in her and she lived!

Childish, right? Immature stuff of infantile days. But is it really so?

If you're thinking about human life you know that it is as important that someone believe in us as it is that we believe in God.

David says it strongly in Psalm 142: I was fading, almost gone, pursued by those who didn't believe in me. "No one is concerned for me...! No one cares for my life!" (vs. 4). But you, Lord, believe in me! You know who I am and what I'm worth. You rally to my side and clap your hands for me in strength and faith. "When my spirit grows faint within me, it is you who know my way!"

The touching verse elsewhere on this page illustrates that theme in a poetic way.

Wayne Brouwer is a pastor at First Christian Reformed Church, London, Ont.

'The touch of the Master's hand'

Myra Brooks Welch

'Twas battered and scarred, and the auctioneer
Thought it scarcely worth his while
To waste much time on the old violin,
But he held it up with a smile.
"What am I bidden, good folks?" he cried.
"Who'll start the bidding for me?
A dollar, a dollar — now two, only two?—
Two dollars. And who'll make it three?"

"Three dollars once, three dollars twice,
Going for three!" — but no!
From the room far back a gray-haired man
Came forward and picked up the bow:
Then, wiping the dust from the old violin,
And tightening up all the strings,
He played a melody pure and sweet—
As sweet as an angel sings!

The music ceased, and the auctioneer,
With a voice that was quiet and low,
Said, "What am I bid for the old violin?"
And he held it up with the bow.
"A thousand dollars! And who'll make it two?
Two thousand! And who'll make it three?
Three thousand once, and three thousand twice,
And going and gone!" said he.

The people cheered, but some of them cried,
"We do not quite understand—
What changed its worth?" The man replied,
"The touch of the Master's hand!"
And many a man with life out of tune,
And battered and torn with sin,
Is auctioned cheap to a thoughtless crowd
Much like the old violin.

A "mess of pottage," a glass of wine,
A game — he travels on.
He's going once, and going twice,
He's going — and almost gone!
But the Master comes, and the foolish crowd
Never can quite understand
The worth of a soul and the change that's wrought
By the touch of the Master's hand!

Imprisoned by the Japanese in Indonesia

In the Shadow of the Sun, *by Ronny Herman. Surrey, B.C.: Vanderheide Publishing Co., 1992. Softcover, 201 pp., $17.95. Reviewed by Robert VanderVennen.*

Stories like this need to be told; great evil may not be hidden or kept secret.

This is the story of a mother and her two young daughters who were interned on Java during the Japanese occupation, 1941-45.

Jeanette Herman-Louwerse (Netty) lived in Soerabaja with her daughters and husband, Fokko, who was in the Dutch air force.

Netty learned that in 1940 her parents, who lived in Middelburg, the Netherlands, were no longer able to receive her letters, nor she theirs. So she kept a diary, thinking she could bring them up to date after the war. This book, prepared by her older daughter, Ronny, who lived through these experiences too, is based on Netty's writings.

When the Japanese soldiers arrived in Soerabaja in March 1941, Fokko was forced to leave. Netty didn't see him again until 1945; she received one brief letter from him during that time. Netty didn't know where he was, nor if he were still alive. She was cut off from her Dutch family, alone in perilous circumstances.

Slowly Netty's life narrowed. At first she continued to live in their home but needed to take in others to live with them. Then they were moved to a concentration camp in Semarang. There she needed to work hard while she and her daughters slowly starved. Her younger daughter came to within just a whisker of death.

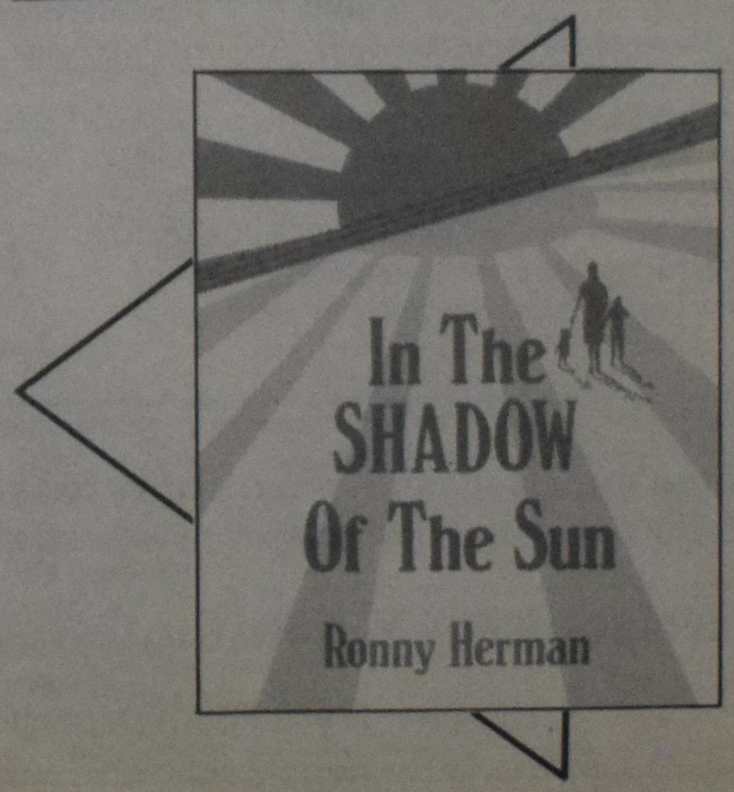
Netty says in the book's introduction, "The Japanese entered our lives: threatening at first, then slowly but surely, in a beastly,...devilish way, achieving their goal: to exterminate all of us by starvation." Indeed, many of those around her in the camp died of starvation.

Happy ending is real

The book interweaves Fokko's story with Netty's. His unit moved to Ceylon; while his life was far from easy, he was not in the kind of jeopardy the rest of his family was in.

This book is well-written. The diary has a matter-of-factness that would not be possible if it were written today about events 50 years ago.

The happy ending is real. All of Netty's family in Holland survived the war, as did her family in southeast Asia. Ronny writes in an epilogue that on May 26, 1992, her parents, Netty and Fokko, celebrated their 55th wedding anniversary.



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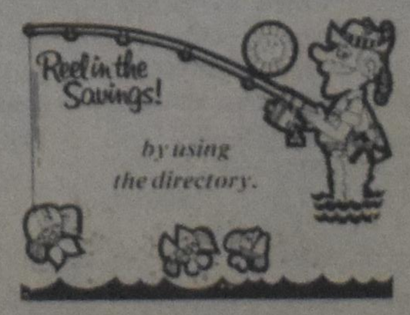

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All other one-column classified advertisements: $13.50 per column inch. NOTE: Minimum fee is $25.00. Letter under file number $35.00 extra. Photos: $25.00 additional charge. (Free when published with anniversary announcement celebrating 50 years or more.)

Note: All rates shown above are GST inclusive

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a) *Christian Courier* reserves the right to print classifieds using our usual format.

b) A sheet with information about an obituary sent by funeral homes is *not* acceptable since it leads to errors and confusion.

c) Photographs sent by fax *are not* acceptable. If you wish a photo included, send us the original.

d) *Christian Courier* will not be responsible for any errors due to handwritten or phoned-in advertisements.

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Christian Courier
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St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
Phone: (416) 682-8311
Fax: (416) 682-8313

Marriages

SNELTJES-HOFTYZER:

With thanks and praise to the Lord

JENNIFER
and
GERALD

together with their parents, Henry and Lena Sneltjes of Cherry Valley, Ont., and Bert and Margaret Hoftyzer of Belleville, Ont., share with you the joyful news that they will be united in marriage on Saturday, Nov. 21, 1992, at 3 p.m. in the Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, 72 Orchard Drive, Belleville, Ont., Rev. J. Visser officiating.

Our mailing address: Box 552, Belleville, Ont.

Births

KIERS:

Hi! My name is Alyssa. I am 3 years old and I go to Sunday school! You know what? Jesus gave me a sister and I love her very much. Her name is:

MARINA ANNA

born 4 weeks early, Sept. 26, 1992, 5 lbs., 7 oz., with bright eyes, dark hair and lovely big feet!

Dad and Mom: John & Sylvia
Grandparents: Hank & Roelie Kiers, Carrying Place, and Martin & Baukina Van Meekeren, Woodstock.
Great-grandparent: Oma Schuitema, the Netherlands.
Adopted great-grandparent: Beppe, Mount Pleasant.
Should you want to contact me, my home address is: 94 Charles Street West, Ingersoll, ON N5C 2L8

OVERDUIN/HEULE:

With great joy and thankfulness, Nandy and Nick praise God for the safe arrival of their second child,

SENECA ANASTASIA

a sister for Natasha.
Born on Nov. 4, 1992, in St. Catharines, Ont.
Home address: 44 South Dr., St. Catharines, ON L2R 4V2

Teachers

Listowel, Ont.: Listowel Chr. School invites applications for the position of **Principal** for the 1993-1994 school year. At present the position consists of 50 percent administration and 50 percent teaching. For information or application contact:

Mary Gibbon, Principal
Box 151, Listowel, ON N4W 3H2
Phone: (519) 291-3086.

Agassiz, B.C.: Agassiz Chr. School. The position for principal in a growing rural Christian school of 106 enrolment is open, starting the 1993/94 school year. Applicants must be committed Christians with goal setting and vision skills. Administrative duties will be 40 percent; and classroom duties 60 percent. Closing date for the position is Jan. 31, 1993. Forward all applications to:

Agassiz Christian School,
Box 3230, Agassiz, BC
V0M 1A0
Attn.: Education Committee

Obituaries

"Commit your way to the Lord, trust in Him, and He will act" (Ps. 37: 5), was Dad and Mom's wedding text and also Dad's text for his funeral.

On Saturday, Oct. 31, 1992, on Reformation day, God took to Himself our husband, grandfather and great-grandfather,

WILLIAM DE VRIES

Dad loved his wife and children so dearly. We will remember his patience, love, his warm and caring personality and above all his deep love for his Creator whom he trusted totally.

We will miss him but thank God for all the years He gave to Dad.

His loving wife for over 56 years
Wietske De Vries (van der Meulen).
Wybe & Elly De Vries — Tucson, Ariz.
Charles & Stella De Vries — Belleville, Ont.
Frances & Mary De Vries — Welland, Ont.
John & Klaaske De Vries — Belleville, Ont.
Owen & Johanna De Vries — Belleville, Ont.
Jane & Peter Dykstra — St. Catharines, Ont.
Freda & Albert Kiers — Wellandport, Ont.
Alice Antonides & children — St. Catharines, Ont.
Robert & Jeanette De Vries — St. Catharines, Ont.
32 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

Predeceased by his first wife Wietske Hayma (1935), a daughter-in-law and a grandson.

Memoriam for Pake William De Vries 10.31.92

Grandfather

A gentle old man
sitting quietly by himself
remembering his wife and children
not thinking of himself.
He remembers the years of his youth
the first and second war
the children being hungry
and always needing more.
He remembers his wife
so faithful all through the years
he remembers the pain and joy
he remembers the love and tears.
He sees his children grow
he sees what they've become
he sees the wonders of creation
and what the Lord has done.
He sees a strong-tied family
one generation changed to more
he sees the gate to heaven
he sees beyond that door.
He smiles to himself
and prays his lasting love
will reach his wife so far below
when he has gone above.

by Wanita Dykstra (granddaughter).

Funeral services were held at Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church, St. Catharines, Ont., on Nov. 3, 1992, with Rev. H. Katerberg officiating.

Correspondence address: Mrs. Wilma De Vries, 2 White Street, Apt. 111, St. Catharines, ON L2N 1Z2

Obituaries

Early in the morning, on Friday, Oct. 23, 1992, the Lord took home suddenly and peacefully our fellow member and friend,

MR. SIMON HOLLEMAN

at the age of 89 years.

May the Lord comfort his wife Mrs. Holleman and family.

From all of us, members of the old age club "Eventide" in Kentville, Nova Scotia.

After suffering with Parkinson's disease for several years,

MR. DIRK JAN VANDENHEUVEL

died on Sept. 26, 1992, in his 87th year.

He is now with the Lord. His name be glorified!

His beloved wife, Christina Verkuyl, children, grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Surviving are relatives in the Netherlands, Argentina, Whitby, Port Perry and Oshawa.

Funeral service was held in Kaye Funeral Home Memorial Chapel on Sept. 29, 1992, at 11 a.m., Pastor J. Poelman officiating. Interment Rosemount Memorial Gardens.

Correspondence address: Mrs. C. VandenHeuvel, 1200 Talwood, Apt. 212, Peterborough, ON K9J 7X3

"For a thousand years in Thy sight are but as yesterday when it is past" (Ps. 90: 4).

The council of Maranatha Chr. Ref. Church of York, Ont., expresses its deepest sympathy to the family with the passing away of

DICK ZANDBERG

on Oct. 31, 1992.

We remember the faithful service he has contributed as an elder for the past number of years.

The council, Maranatha CRC, York, Ont.

Teachers

ATHENS, Ont.: Due to maternity reasons, **Athens Christian School** will require a teacher at the **primary level** effective Feb. 1, 1993, and possibly for the 1993-94 school year. Please send your application and resume to:

Jannie Feenstra, Principal
Athens Christian School
P.O. Box 264
Athens, ON K0E 1B0

More information can be obtained by calling the principal at **(613) 924-9500 (school) or (613) 924-9690 (home).**

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Teachers

Bowmanville, Ont. : Knox Christian School invites applications for a **temporary full-time position in Grade 2**, due to maternity reasons, effective **Feb. 1 through June 1993.** Please send letter of application, resume and references, prior to Nov. 20, 1992, to:

Bill Helmus, Principal
Knox Christian School
410 Scugog St., R.R. 1
Bowmanville, ON L1C 3K2
Tel.: (416) 623-5871

Miscellaneous

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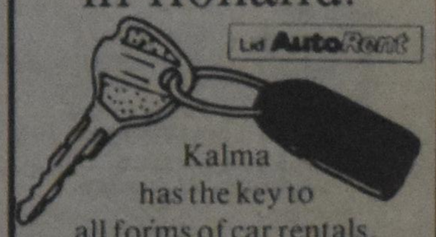

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Events	Teachers

SALEM CHRISTIAN MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL MEETING

Salem Christian Mental Health Association will hold its annual membership meeting on **Saturday, November 21, 1992**, at the **Second Christian Reformed Church, corner Steeles/McLaughlin, Brampton, Ont.** Refreshments at 9 a.m., membership meeting at 9:30 a.m. Speaker: **Dr. Peter L. Van Katwyk**, associate professor at Waterloo Lutheran Seminary. Topic: "Stress and the Family — When Families Help."

For info. contact Rev. A. Dreise at (416) 528-0353

Clinton and District Chr. School will have an opening for

PRINCIPAL

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c/o Mr. Ralph Schuurman, Principal
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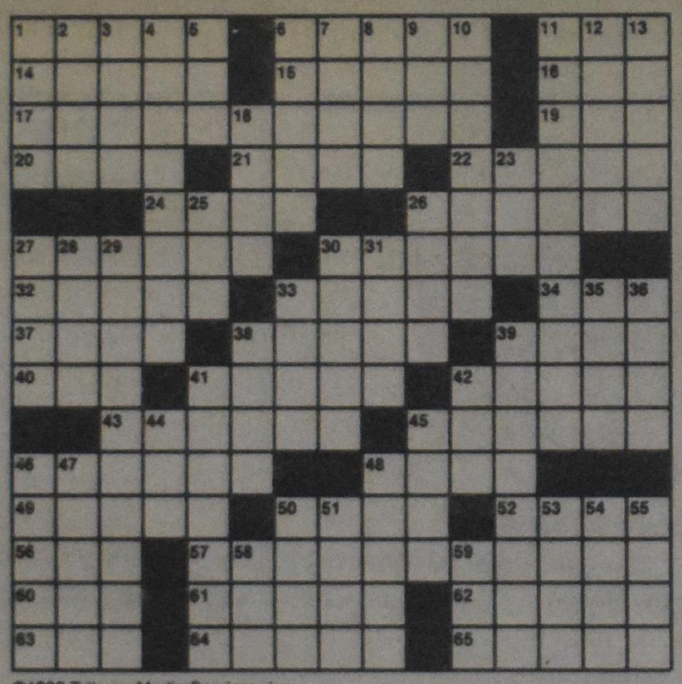
Tel. (416) 743-2554 (evenings)

This week's Puzzle

by Geraldine S. Harris



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50 A — able
52 Raison d'—
56 Spanish gold
57 Sellers film (with "The")
60 Tolstoy
61 — Pyle
62 Spill the — (blab)
63 Bizarre
64 — and bounds
65 Stage whisper

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1 From — to riches
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3 Hebrew month
4 Restrictive
5 Pasture sound
6 Hung. composer
7 God of love
8 Fur
9 Pub drink
10 Breathing spell
11 Ammo holder
12 Motionless
13 Forbidden acts
18 Boost
23 First lady
25 Bill
26 Wad
27 Movie dog
28 Sear
29 Home of a music festival
30 Wander
31 Genesis name
33 Church section
35 Dies —
36 Pinochle word
38 Sea birds
39 Contends
41 Surgical instrument
42 Eccentric wheel
44 "Where the Boys —"
45 Spanish lady
46 Convex molding
47 — over (studied)
48 Tubes
50 Christie
51 Omit
53 Far Easterner
54 Tear
55 Celtic
58 Anger
59 Cagers' gp.

Last week's Puzzle

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L	O	C	H		S	H	O	R	T		A	L	E	E
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B	E	A	T	S	T	H	E	D	R	U	M	F	O	R
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B	E	O	R		S	E	E	R	S		R	E	N	E

Help Wanted

PASTOR NEEDED

The **Neerlandia Chr. Ref. Church** is seeking a pastor. We are a congregation of 110 families within a rural community in North-central Alberta. For our church profile or further information contact:

Search Committee
Neerlandia Chr. Ref. Church, c/o Brenda Strydhorst
Box 4, Neerlandia, AB T0G 1R0
or call (403) 674-5868

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Christian Courier
4-261 Martindale Rd.
St. Catharines, ON
L2W 1A1

Events/Classifieds

Help Wanted

Sociology Vacancy

THE KING'S COLLEGE, a Christian liberal arts college offering 3-year B.A. and B.Sc. degrees, is inviting applications from women and men for a full-time tenure-track vacancy in sociology. This position involves teaching introductory sociology and other undergraduate courses in at least three of theory, methods or statistics, gender relations, family, health and illness, social inequality, and social development or change. Teaching load is moderate and research is expected. A Ph.D. is required as well as agreement with the College's Christian Statement of Faith.

Starting date: July 1, 1993.

Deadline: December 15, 1992 or when filled.

Send application letter, curriculum vitae, copies of transcripts, and three letters of reference to: **Dr. S. Keith Ward, Vice President Academic, The King's College, 10766-97 Street, Edmonton, Alberta T5H 2M1. Tel: 403-428-0727 Fax: 403-425-8166.**

THE KING'S COLLEGE
A Christian Liberal Arts College

The King's College is an equal opportunity employer, but in accordance with Canadian Employment and Immigration regulations, this advertisement is directed to Canadian citizens and permanent residents.

Send your questions to Peter and Marja

Confidentiality is assured.

Calendar

Nov. 14 The "Cantata Singers" and the Niagara Symphony Orchestra (director James D. Flood) perform "Eli," the semi-staged oratorio masterpiece by Michael Costa. At 7:30 p.m., Jubilee Fellowship CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.

Nov. 14 Ministering arts conference, workshops and lectures dealing with worship. Starts 8 p.m., at Maranatha CRC, Belleville, Ont. Info.: (613) 962-2062 or 966-1736.

Nov. 14 Giant bazaar, 10 a.m. Trinity Christian School, 650 Walkers Line, Burlington, Ont. An exciting day for everyone!

Nov. 14 CPJ presents "Heart to Heart — Nation to Nation," an evening of fellowship and reflection. Special speaker: John Olthuis. Banquet at 6 p.m., Chr. School Gym, Willowdale, Ont. Info. (416) 979-2443.

Nov. 17 Organ concert by Canadian concert organist Peter Partridge, 8 p.m., St. Catherine Cathedral, Church St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Nov. 20 The King's College presents "A breath of fresh air," music by Bach, Cabina, Rutter, Dupre and others, 8 p.m., West End CRC, Edmonton, Alta. Performers include Michal Stolarz (flute), Marnie Giesbrecht and Joachim Segger (organ), and the KC Choir, directed by Thomas Holm.

Nov. 21 Salem's annual meeting, 9 a.m., Second CRC, Brampton, Ont. Speaker: Dr. Peter L. Van Katwyk on "Stress and the Family — When Families Help."

Nov. 21 Fall concert by "The Con Spirito Choir" (dir. John Kaldeway), 7:30 p.m., First CRC, Sarnia, Ont. Guests: Andre Knevel at the organ and the ladies choral group "Sing for Joy." Info: (519) 383-0438.

Nov. 21 Giant bazaar, 10 a.m., Calvin Memorial Chr. School, Scott St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Nov. 24 Organ concert by European concert organist Jean Guillou, 8 p.m., St. Catherine Cathedral, Church St., St. Catharines, Ont.

Nov. 24 - Dec. 5: Canadian concert tour by Martin Mans, virtuoso organist from the Netherlands. All events at 8 p.m. Nov. 24: Ebenezer Can. Ref. Church, Burlington, Ont.; Nov. 25: Knox Presb. Church, St. Thomas, Ont.; Nov. 26: Maranatha CRC, St. Catharines, Ont.; Nov. 27: Maranatha CRC, Bowmanville, Ont.; Nov. 28: Chalmers United Church, Woodstock, Ont.; Dec. 2: Can. Ref. Church, Attercliffe, Ont.; Dec. 4: Can. Ref. Church, Fergus, Ont.; Dec. 5: Second CRC, Brampton, Ont. Info: (416) 455-0797.

Nov. 26 - 29 Twenty-five anniversary celebrations, Durham Chr. High School, Bowmanville, Ont. Info.: (416) 623-5940.

Nov. 26-28 "The Tavern," a main stage production by George M. Cohan, directed by Raymond Louter, 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Matinee: Nov. 25 at 12 noon. Info: (416) 648-2131.

Nov. 28 "Eh JJ Show" on Vision TV (watch for local times).

Nov. 27 - Dec. 4 The TDCH drama dept. presents Oscar Wilde's "The Importance of Being Earnest," at the TDCH, Woodbridge, Ont. Regular performances: Nov. 27 and Dec. 3 (8 p.m.). Dinner theatre performances: Nov. 28 and Dec. 4 (7:30 p.m.). For tickets call (416) 851-1772 or 741-2273. a.s.a.p.

Nov. 29 City-wide hymnsing, 8 p.m. First CRC, Sarnia, Ont.

Nov. 30 "Beyond Child Abuse: Hear Their Cries," a conference to promote hope and healing when child abuse occurs. Speakers: Mary VanderVennen, John Groen and Al Dreise. At 7:30 p.m., Rehoboth-Fellowship CRC, 800 Burnhamthorpe Rd., Etobicoke, Ont.

Dec. 2 CFFO Annual convention and banquet at Italian Canadian Club, 135 Ferguson St., Guelph, Ont. Convention at 10 a.m. (keynote speaker: Dr. Ron Vos, Dordt College). Banquet at 5:30 p.m. (speakers: Dr. Hugh Cook and Dr. Ron Matthies). Info.: (519) 837-1620.

Dec. 4 Christmas concert by the RC Concert Choir & Chamber Orchestra (directed by Christiaan Teeuwsen with Carolyn Stronks on flute), 8 p.m., Redeemer College, Ancaster, Ont. Info: (416) 648-2131.

Dec. 6 "Nederlandse Kerstzangdienst," 7:30 p.m. Emmanuel Ref. Church, 170 Clarke St. N., Woodstock, Ont. Will be repeated on Dec. 13, same time. Info: (519) 537-6422.

Dec. 12 Christmas choir and organ concert, with guest organist Andre Knevel, at 7:30 p.m., Centennial United Church, 858 Dundas St., London, Ont.

Attention: Business Community/Christian Organizations Insert YOUR message in our Special 1992 (pre-Christmas) issue.

Calvinist Contact has a new name: **Christian Courier.**
In past years we have supplied members of Christian Reformed churches across Canada with a free copy of the annual Christmas issue. This year we plan to do the same, except it will not be our Dec. 11 Christmas issue that we will send out but a special issue (dated Dec. 4) that better represents the kind of paper we are.

The special December 4 issue will be mailed to our 6,000 subscribers, of course. But in addition, we plan to distribute close to 20,000 copies of this issue to Reformed Christians across Canada.

To print so many extra copies costs money. We are appealing to the business community and to Christian organizations to help us out. Feel free to include your annual Christmas greetings in your ad, as you have done before.

Please do not wait. Take a moment to complete and return the attached coupon. Kindly include precise instructions as to the content of your ad.

Your continued support will be greatly appreciated.

Deadline for advertisements in this special issue is November 20.

COUPON **CHECK ONE**

1) **Small** — size 3" wide x 1 3/4"
Cost $125 + GST = $133.75 ❑
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4-261 Martindale Rd., St. Catharines, ON L2W 1A1
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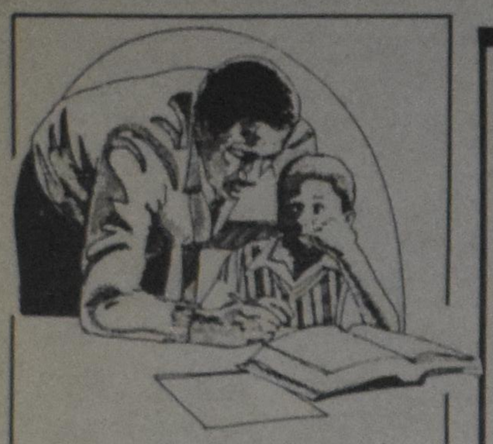
Real Estate



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Events

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NOVEMBER 26-29, 1992

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Church News

Christian Reformed Church

Classis meetings

Classis Huron will meet in regular session in the Drayton CRC on Jan. 13, 1993. Please send all materials for the agenda (no later than Nov. 27, 1992) to Mr. Hilbert Rumph, Stated Clerk, Box 215 Drayton, ON, N0G 1P0.

Classis Hamilton will meet, D.V., in regular session on Jan. 20, 1993, at the Jarvis CRC. All matters for the agenda should be in the hands of John Elgersma, R.R. 1 Cayuga, ON, N0A 1E0, by December 9, 1992.

Changes in service times

Mt. Hamilton CRC in Hamilton, Ont. now holds its Sunday services at 9 a.m. and 5 p.m. Its clerk is Peter Demik of 171 Seneca Ave., Hamilton, ON, L9B 1M1 (416) 679-6173.

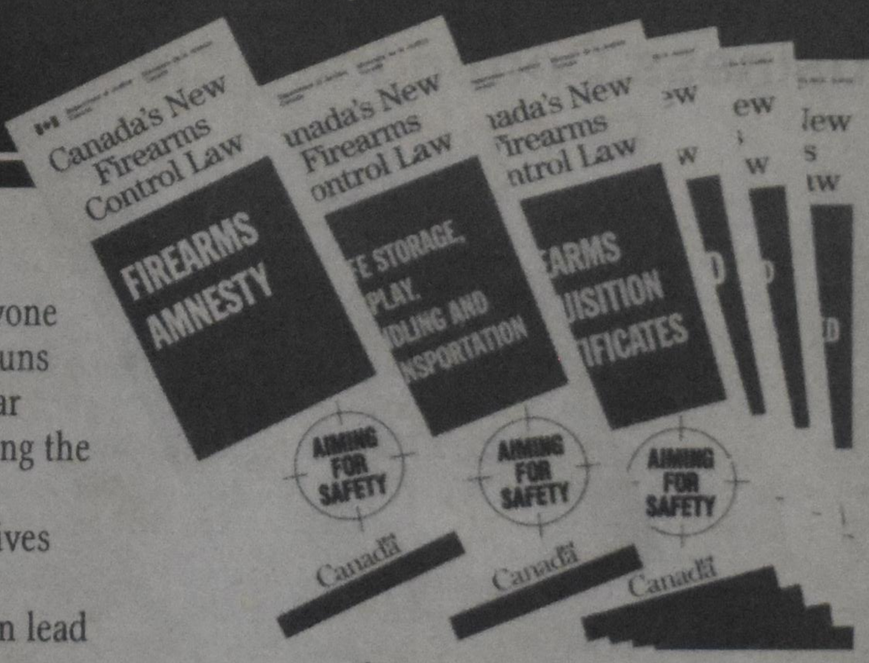
First CRC in St. Thomas, Ont., now holds its Sunday services at 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. (changed from 7 p.m.).

Wanted: army chaplains

The Chaplain Committee seeks contact with Christian Reformed ministers who are interested in career or reserve chaplaincy in the Canadian Armed Forces. Requirements: 3 years of pastoral experience and excellent physical health. Preferably not those over 35 years of age. Contact: 342 Arrowhead Place, Kingston, ON, K7M 3L3.

CANADA'S FIREARMS AMNESTY

November 1 to 30, 1992



Think gun safety. Make it count.

The new firearms control law gives everyone the chance to turn in unwanted or illegal guns and register restricted weapons without fear of prosecution for possession offences during the amnesty. The amnesty means you can also dispose of any prohibited weapons, explosives or ammunition.

Too often, forgotten or neglected guns can lead to a tragedy.

The amnesty is an ideal opportunity to get rid of weapons you no longer want.

Taking advantage of the amnesty is easy. Simply unload the gun and turn it over to your local police. If there is the slightest risk or if you have any questions, call your local police.

Make it happen for the safety of you and your family.

Find out more about the Firearms Acquisition Certificate, safe storage, restricted and prohibited weapons or other parts of the firearms law that concern you. Ask your local police for brochures.

Department of Justice Canada Ministère de la Justice Canada

Canada

News

Evangelicals too have cause for concern: Bibby

... continued from p. 1
with their religious traditions and their continuing search for meaning in the spiritual dimensions of life.

OCSTA president Henry Wiersma (l.) and executive director Hank Hultink were caught off guard when this picture was taken.

If you want to grow, he told his mostly Reformed audience, start with those who think of themselves as being 'Reformed.''

Bibby warned his audience that even evangelical churches, which are generally better attended than mainline churches, are at best only holding their own.

Bibby offered two possible reasons for Canadian's declining interest in organized religion: "Maybe there's a problem with the product — too much emphasis on a just society and not enough on the need for God; or maybe there's a problem with distribution — churches have the product but are not getting it out." Too many churches resemble family shrines, said Bibby, and are not comfortable with outsiders.

Bibby's speech acted as a sober reminder that the theme chosen by the OCSTA convention — "Tell your children" [about the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord] — could not be taken for granted.

Body language tells story

Another main speaker reminded the convention that teachers leave a great impression without even saying anything. Rev. John Klomps, director of the World Bible League of Canada, told his audience that teachers make their mark by showing that they care. "We will tell the next generation about the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord in many different ways," he said, —"even through our attitude and our body language."

He also felt that it is important for teachers to be in tune with the next generation, with children who are increasingly from broken homes and different ethnic backgrounds.

Christian schools not denominational

At OCSTA's business meeting a different note was struck by executive director Hank Hultink. He mentioned that problems are spilling over from the Christian Reformed Church into the Christian schools. "Not only is this regrettable," said Hultink, "it is wrong."

Hultink pointed out that Christian schools are neither parochial nor denominational schools. I resent the process now being used by some detractors of our Christian school system who use denominational issues and considerations to split some of our schools," said Hultink. "I believe that the process and the reasons are un-Christian and dishonest to the constitutions and educational creeds of our Christian schools."

Hultink called on OCSTA members to resist all such developments.

Photos: Bert Witvoet

Teachers Phyllis Alberts-Meijers (l.) and Alice Vanderkooy of Toronto District Christian High, Woodbridge, Ont., enjoy a chat and a coffee outside.

Christian graduate school attracts record enrolment and large gift

C.C. staff

TORONTO—A record-breaking 20 new full-time students came from all over the world to study this year at the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), one of the only Christian graduate schools in Canada. The influx of first-year students brings the number of full-timers to 44, in addition to a sizable body of part-time students.

Five of the new students are from the U.S. and six are from Canada.

New South African students include Samson Makhado, a black school principal who pioneered inter-racial Christian schooling in the city of Venda; Carin Smit, another leader in integrated schooling; and Craig Bartholomew, an Old Testament scholar. Makhado's wife and six children remain in South Africa while he studies educational philosophy at ICS.

Worldview studies, which Bartholomew will be mixing with theology, is a discipline which has also attracted Jacqueline Humphreys and Andrew Jefferson of the United Kingdom, Karen Astles of Australia, Andre Flikweert of the Netherlands and a few Canadians and Americans. Humphreys and Flikweert are both former law students.

Aesthetics, another ICS program, has attracted Hamish Robertson, a former BBC cinematographer from the United Kingdom as well as a handful of Americans.

Two Korean-Canadians also began at ICS this year. Byong Yong Hong is a political science student who worked as an editor for Korean Inter Varsity Press and has already translated recent books by ICS faculty members Paul Marshall and Brian Walsh into Korean. D. J. Kim, a theology student, also pastors a Korean church in Toronto.

While pleased with its increased enrolment, ICS is also celebrating the continuing success of its 25th-anniversary fundraising campaign, which recently received a single donation of $1 million, raising the total of pledges and gifts it has received this year to over $2 million.

ICS aims to raise at least $500,000 more by year end to support an expansion of faculty and an enhancement of its scholarship program and library resources.

Murders, violent attacks escalate in El Salvador

Robert VanderVennen and Bill Fledderus

TORONTO — Although war between government troops and FMLN insurgents has finally ended, many Salvadorans continue to suffer under human rights abuses and violent attacks.

In fact, attacks against members of trade unions and non-governmental organizations rose sharply this fall, according to Suzanne Rumsey of the Inter-Church Committee on Human Rights in Latin America (ICCHRLA).

There have been confirmed reports of at least six assassination attempts on members of various organizations in August (four were successful and two involved torture). October saw at least six murders. Many more unconfirmed attempts have also been reported.

Rumsey and ICCHRLA, of which the Christian Reformed Church is a member, say these attacks "seriously imperil" the demobilization of the FMLN and the ability of the various organizations to work openly in the reconstruction process.

ICCHRLA argues that it is important for the international community to denounce these crimes, adds Rumsey. ICCHRLA asks that we write to the Canadian and El Salvadoran governments and to the United Nations, asking them to ensure that the peace process will continue and to help improve the safety of the individuals being attacked and threatened.

Deadlines not met

One of the main reasons El Salvador is experiencing a period of great uncertainty is that reforms promised by Oct. 31 in the peace accord were not completed on time.

The U.N. has proposed a rescheduling of how the accord is to be implemented, but as of late October the government had refused to accept the new schedule, claiming it had fulfilled its part of the deal.

"Things are really uncertain," says Rumsey. She points out that if the accord falls apart, renewed fighting or even a political coup could result.